

THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE AT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN,  
1932-1933 TO 1982-1983

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For 22 years of unfailing  
love, support, encouragement,  
and pride...

This work is dedicated to  
my parents.



THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE AT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN,  
1932-1933 TO 1982-1983

by

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SENIOR HONORS THESIS

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## PREFACE

On a sweltering hot day, late in August, 1982, I stood jammed in with hundreds of other students in the textbook department of Wallace's Book Store as I absent-mindedly looked through a stack of disintegrating but still unbelievably expensive texts. My mind was, as usual, elsewhere; in this case, it was searching in vain for a senior honors thesis topic. I had to submit to the Plan II office, within a week, my selected subject and the name of a supervising professor--but after a full summer of rumination (honest, every minute), the only topic that had suggested itself was "Game Theoretical Approaches to Business Management Decisions," an idea which sounded, putting it in printable terms, incredibly dry.

Suddenly, I was accosted by a friend, John Mitchell, who had served on a campaign supervisory committee for the Students' Association Election Commission the previous spring; I had been one of the four commissioners at the time. John and I talked, and I told him of my dilemma. He immediately suggested, "Well, how about writing a paper on student government?"

Student government? Hmm.

It sounded interesting. That spring, I had experienced first hand the enthusiasm and excitement generated by the members of Group Effort and Associated Students, the two groups attempting to resurrect student government. I had written or co-authored several of the decisions handed down by the Commission in hearings on motions to overturn the

the election in which the new Association constitution was first adopted. I had indeed become intrigued.

After proposing the idea to several friends and advisors, I submitted the requisite forms, received an enthusiastic "yes" from Dr. Margaret Berry when I asked her to supervise the project, and set out simply to write a history of student government at Texas.

It was the craziest thing I ever did.

As I got deeper into my research, then into transcribing my interviews with former student body presidents, and finally began writing, it dawned on me that the length and complexity of the project had started to grow.

And grow.

And grow.

And grow . . . until it seemed that there was no end in sight. But, to my surprise, it finally did come to an end. Here it is. And no, I don't regret doing it a bit. Student government at the University has a fascinating, sometimes turbulent, and often funny history, and I enjoyed every minute that I spent studying it, without exception. Well, almost without exception.

As I read the old minutes of Student Assembly meetings and pored through years of Daily Texan clippings, the history of the University came alive for me. It was real, almost palpable. And I regret that more students never have or take the opportunity to learn what I learned, quite suddenly, one dazzling spring day as I gazed out from Sid

Richardson Hall over the University of Texas campus:

I love this place.

D. S. G.  
Austin, Texas  
May, 1983.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It boggles the mind--mine, anyway-- when I take stock of all the people to whom I owe my grateful thanks for their invaluable assistance in this project. Mr. Roy Vaughn, Executive Director of the Ex-Students Association, and Ms. Betty Cunningham, Executive Assistant at the Association, both provided great help in locating the former student body presidents whom I wished to interview.

The librarians and staff of the Eugene C. Barker Texas History Center, where I sometimes during the spring semester felt like I lived, showed endless support and interest in my thesis, and were always ready with friendly smiles, even at eight o'clock on Monday mornings, which is no small feat. Special thanks should go to Mr. Ralph L. Elder, assistant archivist at the Barker Center, who was always eager to lend help in locating the Students' Association records and other related materials. Also, Ms. K. Carol Williams, supervisor of the Fleming University Writings Collection, was of aid in securing for me the more recent collections of clippings, notes, and other memorabilia pertaining to the Association.

The constant support and encouragement of Ms. Bettie Cook, Plan II Administrative Assistant, Ms. Ellen Jockusch, Academic Advisor, and Dr. Ira Iscoe, Director of Plan II, always provided a bright spot when the research became overwhelming. I must also thank Plan II for a \$100.00 research grant that partially supported this project.

This work would have taken on a much different look (it would have been only half as long, for starters) if it were not for the time and interest of the one current and 15 former student body presidents who were interviewed: Governor Allan Shivers, Mr. Jenkins Garrett, Dr. Sydney C. Reagan, Judge Barefoot Sanders, Mr. Wales H. Madden, Jr., Judge Harley Clark, Mr. Lowell Lebermann, Mr. John Orr, Mr. Joe Krier, Mr. Bob Binder, Mr. Sandy Kress, Mr. Frank Fleming, Mrs. Carol Crabtree Donovan, Ms. Judy Spalding, Mr. Paul Begala, and Mr. Mitch Kreindler. I would also like to thank Mr. John Denson for his thoughts on everybody's friend, Hank the Hallucination.

My roommate and very good friend Glenn Gross kept me from becoming too seriously mired in the depths of student government and, when time got short near The End, he typed for almost three straight days; he has my thanks from the bottom of my pancreas (which is lower than my heart).

Donna Dennis typed the majority of the text; but, much more than that, she was a constant source of encouragement, strength, and love. She took care of me at those times when I was too tired to look out for myself. And, in the last year and a half, she has taught me what a joy it is to give love as well as receive it.

Dr. Ronald Brown, University Vice-President for Student Affairs, and Dr. Richard Heller, Assistant Dean of Students, have my appreciation for their time in serving as Readers and members of my oral examination committee and for their for-

bearance with my delays in submitting the thesis. As these acknowledgements are being written, Drs. Brown and Heller have not yet seen the work, and "they know not what they getteth into."

Dr. Margaret C. Berry, my supervising professor, has seen the draft, and much to my relief, she liked it. No student could possibly hope for a better advisor than Margaret Berry. Her vast knowledge of the history of the University never ceased to amaze me; but more than that, she was always willing to help in any way possible. Her comments on each chapter were invaluable in helping to make this work of a suitable quality for future reference by other students and scholars. But most importantly, she was always a friend: she shared my excitement, encouraged me when fatigue began to set in, made sure that I ate well and slept at least occasionally, and made me feel free to express myself as I chose to do in the text. For all of this and more, I owe her a tremendous debt of gratitude.

D. S. G.



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## INTRODUCTION

The most discouraging thing about student government is that even those who actively participate in it frequently do not know what is all about, and have utilized it largely as a means of advancing their own popularity or the prestige of their group.

This editorial appeared in the Daily Texan on March 3, 1936--but it could just as well have been March 3, 1966, or 1983. The unfortunate fact is that most students, even today, do not understand their student government; many Student Senators probably have never read the Students' Association constitution. The Students' Association at the University of Texas has had a long, varied, and interesting history, but most students are only dimly aware of perhaps one or two major events in the past. And what is remembered is often distorted into near-legend as it is passed and re-told by word of mouth. Yet student government today is infinitely more complex than it was in 1936; there is far more that students and student leaders need to know.

This work is an attempt to consolidate and interpret some of that knowledge. It is a study of the student government experience at the University of Texas at Austin during the last 50 years. It is not a history per se, but rather an effort to understand where our student government has been, what changes it has undergone and why, where it has succeeded, and where it has failed. It is a story told from the students' perspective, based almost wholly on the

reminiscences of former student body presidents as well as accounts in the Daily Texan, the Cactus yearbook, and the bound volumes of official Students' Association records. As such, it may not always provide a totally objective account, particularly in the areas that relate highly controversial incidents, in which all parties involved remember different "important" details. This problem became especially acute in Chapter 7, which covers the tumultuous late 1960s and early 1970s: wherever possible, an attempt has been made to provide a fair evaluation, sometimes with caveats included in the chapter notes; nonetheless, the reader is cautioned not to consider this study as necessarily the final, authoritative word on the history of student government at the University.

The subject of this work has been delimited in two ways. First, it covers only the period from the 1932-33 school year until the present day: although a brief synopsis of the first fifty years is included in Chapter 2 for purposes of continuity, this span of time has already been well-documented, most notably by Dr. Margaret Berry. Second, while "student government," as it is defined in the broad sense in Chapter 1, could include many student or student/faculty policymaking bodies at the University such as the Senior Cabinet, the Student Involvement Committee of the Ex-Students' Association, and the boards of directors of the Texas Union, the University Co-Op, and Texas Student Publications, our concentration here will be specifically upon the Students' Association (or Student Government, as it was officially known

for several years). However, we will from time to time mention some of these other groups in the context of their interactions with the Association.

Finally, a few words should be said about the interviews. The 16 interview transcripts, which comprise Part IV, are an integral portion of this work that the reader is urged to peruse. They present many fascinating and valuable anecdotes, insights, and personal philosophies that were far too numerous to include in the main text; and, more than anything else, they bring alive the story of student government at Texas. The interviewees were selected on the basis of geographic accessibility (i.e., mostly in Dallas/Ft. Worth, San Antonio, and Austin), willingness and/or availability to be interviewed, and the time during which their terms occurred (with the goal being to have at least one interview to represent each significant period of the Association's development). Unfortunately, two former presidents with whom I had hoped to speak--Jeff Jones (1970-71) and Jay Adkins (1976-77)--could not be located. The interviews have been drawn on frequently in the course of the study, and wherever possible an attempt has been made to indicate such in the text. The interviews are also referenced in the chapter notes by the page numbers that appear in their upper left corners, next to the interviewee's name.

One is almost hesitant to repeat George Santayana's well-worn maxim--"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it"--as a justification for a historical

study such as this one; but in the case of student government, the merit to Santayana's statement is unquestionable. Students are transients on the campus, and student leaders today have little or no sense of the history and traditions of student government at Texas. Hopefully, this work will serve as a tool for them and those who follow, that they may learn from the successes and the failures of their predecessors.

PART I:

THE NATIONWIDE PERSPECTIVE



## CHAPTER 1

### Evolutionary Patterns in Student Government

The University of Texas at Austin campus is frequently described, often to wide-eyed incoming freshmen, as a micro-cosmic world unto itself. It is large and extremely diverse in its population, more so than many cities. And like a city, it can provide its citizens with virtually all their day-to-day needs: living quarters, food, recreation, entertainment, news, mass transportation, health care, and, of course, governance. But just as the city operates within and is influenced by the trends and events which occur in its external environment, namely, the state and the country, so is the University campus merely a part of the larger whole. Many of those who study the University, particularly students, become overwhelmed by its unity of function and neglect to consider the significance of these outside forces. In the case of the topic at hand, an examination of the nationwide patterns in the evolution of student government will help us to place our specific history into the proper context, wherein we will later be able to observe the ways in which the development of our Students' Association has been unique, as well as the occurrences that are more clearly explained as reflections of broader trends.

#### What Is "Student Government"?

But even before we take that step, we would be wise to decide exactly what it is that we are examining. "Student

Government" is a term that is all too often bandied about-- usually, again, by careless students, although some academicians are guilty as well--without considering a specific meaning. So what is student government? For the purpose of completeness and wide applicability, I will isolate three major components. First, student government involves student participation in governance of the college or university.<sup>1</sup> "Governance" refers to a structure and process of making decisions about purposes, policies, programs, and procedures<sup>2</sup>; it involves exercise of authority, direction, and control.<sup>3</sup> The functions of governance are usually vested in a Board of Trustees or Board of Regents who then exercise their authority by specific delegations to administrators. The second area is that of student participation in management of the institution. "Management" continues where the governing process ends: It is the often far more difficult task of skillfully implementing the plans and decisions as constructed. A student government that can involve its constituency in the phase of university operations can be a tremendous asset to the administration, upon which management responsibility devolves.<sup>4</sup>

The third component of student government is provision of student services--such activities as discount programs at campus-area merchants, administration of campus recreation facilities, approval of and information on off-campus housing, book exchanges, garage sales, orientation for new students, forums for candidates for public office, and, in earlier days, abortion loan funds and draft evasion clinics. Also

in this category would be the function of calling administrative attention to neglected services that are badly needed by the student body but are beyond the resources of the student government to provide. For example, at Texas, the Students' Association fought for and eventually achieved the establishment of a University-owned hospital to furnish low-cost health care, and a system of buses to shuttle students living off campus to and from school so as to help alleviate parking congestion. Strangely, the student services function of student government is all but ignored in most studies of the subject, perhaps because, in a strict sense, it is not "government" at all. However, most governments in the public realm believe to at least some degree that the provision for the welfare of their constituency is a basic tenet of governmental responsibility. And indeed, though student services programs may not always be the headline-grabbing activities of a student government, they appear to occupy a significant part, if not a majority, of the governing body's time and effort. For these reasons, we will include the provision of services in our definition of student government.

We may make two observations based on this definition. First, the three components of student government overlap somewhat. How, for instance, would we characterize legislative lobbying by a student government in a state-supported school to prevent a tuition increase? Its representatives are participating in governance, at the very highest level; but simultaneously, they are serving the students by attempting

to save them money. This "fine line" problem is the reason why we will usually use the blanket term "student government," rather than referring to governance in one place, management in another, and so on. This leads to our second observation: not all student governments concentrate their energies equally in all three areas. Some, in fact, may deal in only one realm--often student services--and take no active role in the others. These types of organizations usually call themselves student unions instead of students' associations, but since they are generally the only representative-type organ of the student body, we should include them for the purposes of discussion in our broad definition.

#### Development of Student Government

With its details now clearly in mind, we may proceed to survey the changing dimensions in student government across the country. Actually, the in-depth chronicled history of student governments does not begin until around 1960: prior to that time, the student services function was the primary focus of campus leaders, who "seemed content to confine their interest in decision-making to the selection of homecoming queens, the election of prom committees and cheerleaders,...the writing of school songs," and other similarly limited matters related to the quality of student life.<sup>5</sup> This placid era came to an abrupt end as the 1960s ushered in a decade of student activism on the nation's campuses. The revolution, which of course extended far beyond student government to touch every person involved with a given university, had at least three distinct

thrusts: (1) an attack on the standards of social conduct and behavior imposed by faculty and/or administrators; (2) an attack on the basic idea of higher education's purpose in relation to the "Establishment"; and (3) an attack on educational priorities that seemed to favor research (particularly in warfare and defense) and public service over undergraduate instruction.<sup>6</sup>

Although this student unrest had apparently been brewing for several years, administrators and faculty were nonetheless relatively unprepared for eruptions such as the trail-blazing Berkeley Free Speech Movement revolt of 1964, the Columbia insurrection and uprising in 1968, and the numerous less violent bandwagon occurrences that both intervened and followed. It was a time of nationwide deinstitutionalization and reorganization in all levels of university government, and college personnel had their hands full:

[T]he student revolution tended to express itself in action rather than discussion, in disruption rather than efforts to achieve a legitimacy in the power process. Much of the attention of faculties, presidents, and governing boards was necessarily addressed to the issue of how to interest students in the orderly exercise of power in an atmosphere of civility and reasoned discourse.<sup>7</sup>

Students demanded that the institution be immediately and totally responsive to their specific desires: removal of the doctrine of in loco parentis to allow greater individual freedom and control over their personal lives, free exercise of their civil and political rights, help from the powerful Establishment in solving what they saw as society's great moral problems, less institutional impersonality, an improved curriculum that was relevant to the contemporary world.<sup>8</sup> The

activists quickly discovered, however, that alterations in the status quo occur in the inertia-bound American university with painful slowness; the urgency of their demands clearly required the development of new means by which to achieve them. One of these methods was to seek an increased role for students (usually acquired by some combination of behind-the-scenes talks with administrators and public demonstrations ) in the policy-making activities of the university.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, in the mid-'60s, student participation in university governance was born. The American Association of University Professors acknowledged this new student interest in its 1966 statement of principles, when it suggested that "ways should be found to permit significant student participation within the limits of attainable effectiveness"; just six short years earlier, the AAUP had recognized only the faculty, administration, and governing board as legitimate policy-making entities.<sup>10</sup>

By 1969, student participation in both governance and management of the institution was all but a fact of life for administrators. As a professor of political science at California State Polytechnic noted, the question was no longer whether decision-making power should be granted to students, but rather how it should be granted, and to what degree.<sup>11</sup> And by the mid-'70s--prodged by the 1971 Constitutional enfranchisement of 18-20 year olds, which suddely gave students of large public universities substantial influence in their state legislatures--institutions nationwide had adjusted to most, though by no means totally acquiesced to all, of the students' demands for control

of campus life.<sup>12, 13</sup>

### Problems in Modern Student Government

As multifunctional student government has matured in the last six or seven years, numerous inherent problems have appeared. Student leaders are for the most part untrained for their roles, and many of them participated primarily to bolster their own egos and resumes. These students are frequently the ones who dominate the governing process, and in so doing, tend to create massive, largely unproductive bureaucracies. These structures are often archaic copies of other government forms. Little attention is usually given to the unique needs and requirements of the college doing the copying, leading to annual constitutional amendments and re-writings.<sup>14</sup>

But by far the most incisive criticism of modern student governments is that, whatever else they do, few if any govern in a meaningful way.<sup>15</sup> Many elements combine to bring about this result. First, student bodies have displayed increasing apathy towards their governments, a fact indicated by nationwide steady declines in campus election voter turnouts. Why? Because student interest is a function of the prevailing level of issue-induced stimulus; while some issues, such as the availability of various student services, continue to be significant, the major, highly controversial issues of a decade or more ago--restrictions in residence-hall life, student evaluation of faculty instructional performance, penalties for disruptive activities, control of student fees, and so on--have been either resolved or otherwise rendered moot.<sup>16</sup> Without the

spur of controversy, student participation waned. Furthermore, the ever-increasing interest in careers, in part because of uncertain employment prospects in the face of economic recession, propelled students back to their books and classes, and away from rallies and committee meetings.<sup>17</sup> Where students once were dedicated to changing their university and their world during their college years, even at the price of delaying graduation, today they are told to not make waves, earn their degree, and get out into the job market as fast as possible.

Sadly, the apathy which helps cause the impotence of student government itself feeds on that ineffectiveness. "Many students, if not most, simply do not regard student government as relevant to their interests and problems"<sup>18</sup>; disinterest ensues, further devitalizing the governing body. But in this respect, as one dean of students notes, "apathy may be a healthy and legitimate response to a silly situation."<sup>19</sup>

Related to apathy is a second reason why student governments have had little impact in policy-making and management: they do not truly represent the student body as a whole. Most student government elections are mockeries of democracy: "Slight participation, mismanaged election rules, pressure groups urging election based on popularity instead of competency, and a general who-cares attitude deface what remains of a beautiful heritage of government by the people."<sup>20</sup> In schools with large highly diverse populations, minorities are frequently under-represented or not represented at all. Voter turnout, as noted previously, is usually dismal, resulting in a govern-



ment that, to be accurate, only speaks for the perhaps 10% of the student body that took time to go to the polls. In view of all these deficiencies, administrators and faculty members are understandably reluctant to look to student governments for advice on decisions that will sometimes affect thousands of people. And worse, the students themselves see their elected and appointed officials as providers of virtual, not actual, representation.<sup>21</sup>

Government by students is also made less meaningful by a third shortcoming--students have very little substantive, institutionalized power. More and more critical decisions are being controlled on the state level, increasingly distant from the campus arenas where students had at least some influence.<sup>22</sup> Resolutions and actions of student senates usually have little impact, since they are easily ignored by faculties and administrators who don't view the legislative body as representative of the larger student will. On the other hand, formal student participation on university committees and boards has also yielded relatively meager student influence: even if the student seats are not token pacification gestures, those who hold them are usually tremendously outnumbered by administration or faculty representatives, reducing effective student voting power to near zero. In addition, faculty expertise and administrator professionalism sometimes far outweigh student appeals for reforms in the eyes of decision-makers, no matter how well they are presented.<sup>23</sup> And underlying all of these barriers is a basic, inherent, virtually inescapable student

disadvantage, as former Texas student body president Sandy Kress observed:

The fundamental weakness that students have is that they're young, they're inexperienced, and they're mobile, in transit--and everybody knows it; legislators know it. Those weaknesses make it very difficult for you to have a meaningful and effective student government.<sup>24</sup>

Students have the shortest "lifetime" of any group on campus, usually four years. If we consider the productive life of a student leader to be two years (at most three), the chances are small that he will see his project from conception, through the institution's established bureaucratic procedures, and to its ultimate success. Thus, unless he is content either to work on already existing projects or to allow future students to complete his own, his only logical recourse is to bypass the regular channels for planning and change and go directly to the university president, the governing board, or, in public colleges, the state legislature.<sup>25</sup> This strategy has been used frequently in the last fifteen years, especially at the University of Texas, with considerable success. But use of these ad hoc procedures runs the immediate risk of retaliation from a faculty and administration indignant at having their authority circumvented; in the long run, it tends to delegitimize the very decision-making structure--on both the student and university levels--that enables the institution to operate in a smooth, orderly fashion from day to day. Bypassing established channels, then, is in no way a permanent solution to the power problem.

### Student Governments In Action Today

Clearly, the developmental process is not yet complete for student government. Nevertheless, not all student governments have buckled under the weight of the handicaps we just noted, as the Students' Association at Texas apparently did in 1978 when it was abolished by student referendum. Indeed, many student governments have flourished, and most colleges and universities nationwide still have some form of student government. In the hopes of attaining a broader perspective on the modern student government experience, questionnaires were sent to the vice-presidents for student affairs at 25 major universities (exhibit 1), both public and private, across the country. Each administrator was asked, if his or her school had an active student government, to respond to a few admittedly highly subjective questions about its efficacy and influence. The questionnaire also asked for additional comments and any literature available on that campus' government.

Responses came from only 15 schools, as indicated in exhibit 1. Of these, two returned descriptive information, but not the questionnaire. Also, many of the forms were passed on to student leaders, although the cover letter explicitly asked for an administrative evaluation. The accuracy and representativeness of the survey is therefore questionable; still, the responses were interesting (exhibit 2). All 15 universities did have a functioning student government. To the first question, concerning student government influence in student-related policy decisions, six schools each answered

## EXHIBIT 1

Universities Contacted for Student Government Survey

<u>University</u>	<u>Location</u>
Boston University*	Boston, MA
University of California*	Berkeley, CA
University of California*	Los Angeles, CA
University of Chicago	Chicago, IL
University of Colorado*	Boulder, CO
Columbia University*	New York, NY
Cornell University	Ithaca, NY
Duke University	Durham, NC
Harvard University**	Cambridge, MA
Marquette University	Milwaukee, WI
University of Miami*	Coral Gables, FL
University of Michigan	Ann Arbor, MI
Northwestern University	Evanston, IL
University of Oklahoma*	Norman, OK
University of Pennsylvania	Philadelphia, PA
Princeton University*	Princeton, NJ
Purdue University*	Lafayette, IN
William Marsh Rice University*	Houston, TX
Southern Methodist University**	Dallas, TX
Stanford University	Stanford, CA
Texas A & M University*	College Station, TX
Texas Tech University	Lubbock, TX
Vanderbilt University*	Nashville, TN
University of Virginia*	Charlottesville, VA
Yale University	New Haven, CN

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\*Returned completed questionnaire; some included additional materials.

\*\*Returned informative material, but did not return questionnaire.

## EXHIBIT 2

Student Government Survey Responses

- Does your university currently have an active Students' Association or similar student-governing body?  
Yes (15)                      No (0)
- To what degree, in your opinion, does the student government influence administrative policy-making decisions on student-related issues?  
Greatly (0)  
Significantly (6)  
Somewhat (6)  
Very little (1)  
Not at all (0)
- Approximately what proportion of administrative policy decisions on student-related issues would you say are initiated in, by, or through the student government?  
100% (0)  
75% (1)  
50% (1)  
25% (9)  
0% (2)

"significantly" and "somewhat," with only one responding "very little." The second question regarded the proportion of such decisions that were initiated by the student government. Surprisingly, there was one "75%" and one "50%" response--not from students--but from the Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Student Relations at UCLA and the Executive Vice-President of Texas A & M University, respectively. The responses of the remaining eleven were either "25%" or "0%," more typical of the responses anticipated.

Several of the colleges also took time to provide supplementary information. This ranged from the mundane and humorous--referring to the recent election of a comic strip "hallucination" to the UT Students' Association presidency, the Texas A & M student body president wrote: "We elect real people for office (and you guys call Aggies weird!)"--to truly helpful. Let us now look at a few brief examples of student government in action today, at three public and four private or independent institutions, that will help us to understand some of the common problems and pitfalls faced by student governments as well as a few of the "formulas" for their success and survival.<sup>26</sup>

Columbia University. The student government function at Columbia resides in the Student Affairs Committee of the University Senate. The Senate, created in 1969, replaced the old University Council, which had been composed of administrators and faculty. As now constituted, the Senate includes 42 tenured and 15 non-tenured faculty members, 21 students, nine administrators, two alumni, and six staff members, for a total membership of 95.

The Student Affairs Committee is composed of 16 of the 21 student senators and has jurisdiction over all university-wide student life concerns, including organizations, housing, extracurricular activities, and student concerns in the community. Both students and faculty are elected on a proportional basis from each of the 16 individual colleges or "faculties." In elections, at least one-third of the eligible voters in a particular faculty must vote, or else that faculty goes unrepresented for that year; at least two faculties have for several successive years been missing from the Senate due to this provision.<sup>27</sup> The Senate has enjoyed somewhat limited efficacy and is "perceived as a useful but not spectacular addition to governance of the academic community."<sup>28</sup>

The University of Wisconsin at Madison.<sup>29</sup> As a result of violent student demands, students were added first to some and later, in 1966, to almost all faculty committees. The militant students rejected this move as one of pacification and cooptation, and the following year the Wisconsin Student Association (WSA) was formed. The WSA insisted that the faculty withdraw from all policy-making activities in areas of "solely student concern." Although the WSA was not officially recognized, the faculty set up an ad hoc committee to study the role of students in government of the university. As a result of the committee's 1968 report, most restrictions on student life were lifted, and students were given greater representation on faculty committees. Still, the faculty has made it clear that student participation in final decision

making is unacceptable; in the absence of a student senate or assembly, faculty domination of the process has remained intact.

Boston University. Student government at Boston University is an educational program coordinated by the school's Division of Student Affairs. Authority is fragmented between the campus-wide Boston University Student Union, the individual residence hall governments, and the councils of the schools and colleges. The Dean of Students acts as Chief Executive and Financial Officer to the entire system, allocating an annual budget of \$250,000 among the various groups. Funding is provided by a \$30.00 Community Services Fee, of which the student initiated programs receive over 50%. The Assistant to the Dean of Students noted that the student governments have little or no influence in student-related administrative policy decisions. A large-scale reorganization of the system is being discussed at present, but details on it were unavailable.

The University of Miami (Florida). The Undergraduate Student Body Government (USBG) at Miami has developed over the past years into a strong, vital part of the campus. The USBG is supported by a portion of the mandatory student activities fee, which is allocated by an independent fee committee among various student programs; last year, the USBG received \$27,680. The USBG Senate has power in almost all areas of student life, and appears to divide its efforts nearly equally between policy-making and provision of services. A useful tool in successfully bringing about policy changes is "external response legislation":



when the Senate passes a bill that recommends a change in university policy--such as in drop dates, academic standards, or budget issues--the administration must respond to it within 30 days, or else it becomes university policy. The USBG also actively provides student services, including a discount off-campus dental plan, the Student Union, and the USBG Supercard, a plastic "credit card" entitling the student to numerous discounts and freebies at Coral Gables merchants. For all its successes, however, the USBG still suffers from many of the same common problems: open communications with the faculty are just beginning to develop, and student apathy is rampant--only four out of 18 vacant seats were contested in last fall's Senate elections.

The University of Colorado at Boulder. The University of Colorado Student Union (UCSU) is an excellent example of a student government body that is almost totally student-service-oriented. The union is the third largest in the nation and budgets \$8.7 million in total revenue each fiscal year, including \$4.8 million from student fees. In addition to the union building, UCSU operates the student health center and the recreation center. The governing structure is a typical three-branch system, with an active staff of about 25 students working between 20 and 40 hours per week. UCSU does have paid staff positions for university administrative, community, and state legislative liaisons, although the activities of these posts comprise a relatively small proportion of the UCSU's energies.

Southern Methodist University. The SMU Students'

Association consists of four executive officers, a 36-member Student Senate, and 14 standing committees. Twenty-five of the Senators are elected from the academic schools, on the basis of one for each 300 students; in addition, there are seven special interest seats and four freshmen Senator positions. The strong and effective committee structure involves over 300 additional students. In the late '60s and early '70s, students demanded, and received, a major voice in policy-making, with authority divided among College Assemblies, about a third of whose memberships were elected students. But as observed by former Texas student body president Sydney Reagan, who chaired the SMU School of Business Administration from 1955 until 1981 and was at the time president of the Faculty Senate:

This structure of governance, with the students being involved in all kinds of decisions, collapsed of its own weight just a few years later, because the students really didn't want it. They didn't want participation to that extent.<sup>30</sup>

Today, as noted in the SMU Student Senate brochure, the guiding philosophy of the organization is service--special projects and legislation which enhance the quality of life for the SMU community.

The University of California at Berkeley.<sup>31, 32</sup> The Associated Students of the University of California (ASUC) has developed from a body designed to promote "honor spirit" into a highly complex organization, with a president, numerous vice-presidents, a 30-member senate, and an array of student committees. The ASUC allocates student fee monies, approves policy statements, and ratifies student appointments to

university committees; in addition, it owns and operates the campus bookstore and the student union food service. Students sit on almost all of the advisory committees to the chancellor, and the ASUC has had a generally cordial relationship with the administrators. However, students have been far less successful in formal representation in academic decision-making, with votes on only 7 of 33 academic senate committees. Also, one voting student serves on the 26-member system Board of Regents. The ASUC has felt hampered due to exclusion, in large part, from the University's flow of information on major issues of campus concern. The student leaders therefore have used the UC Student Lobby to deal directly with state officials and legislators; the UCSL has earned considerable respect for its impact and efficacy. But as at most other large schools, apathy plagues the student government, with only 15 to 20 percent of the student body voting in ASUC elections, on average.

\* \* \* \* \*

If we were to try to summarize the nationwide evolutionary patterns that we have just observed in both history and modern examples into a general, easy-to-grasp form, we might compare them to the stages of growth experienced by a human being. This is perhaps a peculiar metaphor, in that the individual phases in student government's development have each of course required far more time than the comparable ones for a person. Yet the comparison is not, I believe, inaccurate. Until 1950, student government's attentions were

largely confined to the immediate campus, and its efforts were directed at growing and discovering its own potentials-- similar to a child until he reaches age 8 or 9. The next decade, comparable to the "young teen" of 10 to 13 years of age, witnessed an ever-growing awareness of the world outside the immediate campus environment, but was still relatively peaceful. Suddenly, in the sixties and seventies, student government entered an explosive adolescence, characterized by defiance of authority, confusion about intangibles such as morals, and desires for power, personal freedom, and instant gratification. And sometime in the late '70s, the turbulent life of student government began to calm; it took stock in itself and its future--much like, ironically, a young adult about to enter college.

If we accept this analysis, then it would stand to reason that student government is now reaching towards maturity. What lies ahead for the "adult" student government? Perhaps we will discover some helpful answers as we proceed to examine the "life" history, to date, of student government at the University of Texas at Austin.

## CHAPTER 1

Notes

<sup>1</sup>Here and throughout this paper, I will use the terms "college" and "university" to refer exclusively to accredited four-year undergraduate- and graduate-degree program institutions. For most, but not all, purposes, this may be narrowed further to include only fairly large, well-established, nationally recognized research universities, since the smaller campuses typically are able to carry out student government via some form of the mass "town meeting" concept--if, indeed, they have student government at all.

<sup>2</sup>John D. Millett, New Structures of Campus Power: Success and Failures of Emerging Forms of Institutional Governance (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publications, 1978), p. 9.

<sup>3</sup>Don Creamer, "Alternatives to Traditional Student Government," Peabody Journal of Education, LII (January 1975), p. 111.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Sue Schlesinger and J. Victor Baldridge, "Is Student Power Dead in Higher Education?" College Student Journal, XVI (Spring 1982), p. 9.

<sup>6</sup>Millett, p. 31.

<sup>7</sup>Millett, p. 33.

<sup>8</sup>Lewis B. Mayhew, "Students in Governance--A Minority View," in John M. Whitely (editor), Students in the University and in Society (Washington, D.C.: The American College Personnel Association, a division of The American Personnel and Guidance Association, 1970), p. 13.

<sup>9</sup>Kenneth P. Mortimer and T.R. McConnel, Sharing Authority Effectively: Participation, Interaction, and Discretion (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc., Publishers, 1978), p. 162.

<sup>10</sup>Millett, pp. 2-3.

<sup>11</sup>William M. Alexander, "Rethinking Student Government for Larger Universities," Journal of Higher Education, XL (January 1969), p. 40.

<sup>12</sup>Millett, pp. 215 ff.

- <sup>13</sup>Schlesinger and Baldrige, p. 9.
- <sup>14</sup>Creamer, pp. 110-111.
- <sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 111.
- <sup>16</sup>Millett, pp. 214-215, 223.
- <sup>17</sup>Schlesinger and Baldrige, p. 10.
- <sup>18</sup>Alexander, p. 41.
- <sup>19</sup>Creamer, p. 113.
- <sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 111.
- <sup>21</sup>Alexander, pp. 39-40.
- <sup>22</sup>Schlesinger and Baldrige, p. 10.
- <sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 11.
- <sup>24</sup>Interview with Sandy Kress, January 3, 1983, p. 11.
- <sup>25</sup>Alexander, p. 40.
- <sup>26</sup>Except where otherwise noted, this information is taken from the correspondence and literature received from the colleges.
- <sup>27</sup>Millett, p. 44.
- <sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 48.
- <sup>29</sup>In Millett, pp. 48-55.
- <sup>30</sup>Interview with Sydney Reagan, February 12, 1983, p. 11.
- <sup>31</sup>In Millett, pp. 64-71.
- <sup>32</sup>Caleb Foote, Henry Mayer, et al, The Culture of the University: Governance and Education (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc., Publishers, 1968), pp. 36 ff.

PART II:  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS EXPERIENCE

## CHAPTER 2

### The First Fifty Years: 1883-1932

As noted in the Introduction, the primary focus of this work is on the most recent fifty year period in the history of student government at Texas. However, the Students' Association didn't, of course, suddenly come into full-fledged existence during the 1932-33 administration of Association President Allan Shivers: indeed, its formation and early development was turbulent, chaotic, and complex, in many ways not unlike those we will observe in the later history. Therefore, so that we may have the most comprehensive understanding possible, let us look briefly at those early years.<sup>1</sup>

To be accurate, student government did not actually appear on the University campus until some 19 years after the first Long Session in 1883; however, the honor system, modeled after one employed at the University of Virginia, was used during this period, relying on the self-enforced integrity of students to prevent cheating on quizzes. Whether the movement to form a student government body was spontaneous on the part of the students or was in fact organized by the administration is not certain. But it is clear that student leaders recognized the need for some sort of student government, as an editor of the 1901 Cactus yearbook observed:

"Lack of proper student organization still prevents the sober opinion of the institution finding free expression and we suffer somewhat in being often judged by sporadic actions and utterances of irresponsible individuals.

One can hardly say that, as yet, the student



body of the University of Texas has a point of view. It is merely a bundle of good and bad notions and prejudices."<sup>2</sup>

A mass meeting of the student body (a concept which today seems incomprehensible) was called by student petition on January 10, 1901, and one of those present introduced a resolution calling for the formation of a students' council and the appointment of a seven-member committee to draft a constitution and a set of by-laws. The administration viewed the movement with favor: University President William L. Prather envisioned an organization that could help with the practical problems of the day, such as "hack hire, laundry bills, etc.," as well as promiscuous cheating, noise in the corridors and library, and excessive absences from classes. On February 26 of that year, the new constitution and bylaws were printed in The Texan and a mass meeting was called to take action upon them; but students didn't understand these changes and feared their implications on campus life, and the new documents were not adopted.

Over a year later, in April of 1902, Academic Dean David Houston (who later succeeded Prather to the presidency) called a student meeting. He urged the students to apply the principles learned in the self-government of B. Hall (the men's dormitory) to the broader needs of all the students on campus. A temporary chairman was nominated, and another committee of seven was appointed to make plans for a students' organization that had as its purposes the management of student publications, the regulation of time and manner of holiday celebrations,

and the establishment of a healthy and vigorous college spirit. The committee set to work, but some students still opposed it because they feared that student government would become a system for spying and prying into the private character and conduct of the individual.

Finally, on May 24, 1902, the new constitution was adopted in yet another mass meeting. Three days earlier, the Women's Students' Association had approved its own constitution, since women could not serve as officers in the male-dominated Students' Association, although they had full voting privileges. Thus, by the start of the 1902-03 term, student government was a reality, and over the next several years, the Students' Association assumed responsibility for the various student publications and the annual March 2 celebration of Texas Independence Day.

The first of many major reorganizations of the Association occurred in the spring of 1912. Students were dissatisfied that the Students' Council did not have legislative power; they accepted, by means of the Australian ballot--first used in 1909 when hand-counts at mass meetings became unwieldy--a plan for a Students' Assembly: "a body composed entirely of students who will legislate for the University community in those matters of peculiarly student interest." The faculty was happy to be relieved of the responsibility of administering student affairs.

Reorganization came again, only four years later, in the spring of 1916. The present Students' Assembly was reduced in

membership from seventeen to six and renamed the Men's Council. Together with the Women's Council, it helped to enforce the honor system; each council "tried cases" in which students of their sex were involved. Collectively, the duties of the new Students' Assembly included making new social regulations, allocating the blanket tax to various organizations, and sponsoring all-University activities.

Students continued to feel that the faculty dominated student government from the outside. In an effort to consolidate power somewhat in a unified student body, and in accordance with the women's rights movement, a new constitution was adopted in a special election on March 26, 1917. The new document abolished the Women's Assembly and the Women's Students' Association and opened the Men's Assembly--now truly a Students' Assembly--to both men and women, with equal rights for representation. Meanwhile, the Men's and Women's Councils became judiciary bodies, charged with enforcement of the honor system. The new government was relatively active through the mid-'20s: the Students' Association chartered Texas Student Publications, Inc. in 1921; later, it participated in raising money and making plans for Memorial Stadium, dedicated in 1924.<sup>3</sup>

Agitation over increasing difficulties in maintaining the efficacy of the honor system built up during 1924-25. A joint vote of the Honors Councils in 1926 recommended the system's abolition, but it wasn't until two years later that students could be convinced that the Honor System was impossible to enforce. In the interim, the president of the Students'

Association appealed to the faculty for help in administering the system. A student editor quoted one professor's reaction:

Yes, I believe in student government. It doesn't mean anything, but they think it does. Whenever anything of consequence comes up, it just naturally ceases to function. It keeps a few of the more officious harmlessly occupied and gives them a feeling of self-importance.

On December 6, 1928, the Student Assembly abolished the honor system and asked the faculty to assume supervision of examinations after January 3, 1929. The Honors Councils continued to sit as separate, largely powerless bodies until the fall of 1931, when a constitutional amendment merged them into a single Judiciary Council consisting of a chairman, three men, and three women, all elected at large by the student body. The new Council was charged with interpreting and deciding cases arising under the constitution and by-laws of the Students' Association.

As the Association entered the 1930s student interest had begun to lag. Most of the powers of self-government once delegated to the students had been gradually withdrawn by the university administration over the years; one editor of The Daily Texan even expressed pessimism as to the continued future of student government at the University of Texas. But continue it did.

## CHAPTER 2

Notes

<sup>1</sup>This chapter is based, except where otherwise noted, on Chapter V, "Student Government and the Honor System," in Margaret Catherine Berry, Student Life and Customs, 1883-1933, at the University of Texas (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1965), pp. 210-258. Dr. Berry's treatment of this period is far more detailed than the synopsis that appears herein, and the interested reader may wish to examine it at the Barker Texas History Center.

<sup>2</sup>The Cactus, Yearbook of the University of Texas, 1901, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup>Margaret Berry, "Highlights in the History of Student Participation in Governance at the University of Texas" (University History Project--unpublished, October 21, 1977), p. 12.

Additional Information: The Texan and The Daily Texan, clippings, 1901-1932; available in vertical files at the Barker Center.

## CHAPTER 3

### 1932/33-1939/40: Focus on Campus Life

The attention and energy of the Students' Association during the remainder of the 1930s was devoted almost solely to improving the life of the student on campus. The day-to-day business of the Assembly and the executive officers included conducting fund-raisers, such as the annual Santa Claus Drive held during the mid-30s, for various charities; sponsoring, organizing, and operating the weekly "Germans," all-University dances held on Saturday nights; appointing or electing students to various Assembly committees; activities to foster school spirit; and the like. A December 1932 Assembly meeting was devoted to a lengthy, "heated discussion" on the question of Bevo's upkeep during the winter and spring: on this critical question, the group finally decided to send the Longhorn mascot home rather than pay for his feed and shelter in Austin.<sup>1</sup> Another issue that absorbed a great deal of time the following year was a bitter challenge of the Assembly's right to vote to give its members free passes to the Germans, while other students had to pay;<sup>2</sup> after due consideration, the assemblymen, not surprisingly, upheld this privilege.

But overall, students of this decade, attending the University as the nation struggled in the economic grip of the Great Depression, placed far more emphasis on their primary roles as students than on the subsidiary activity of campus politics, as Jenkins Garrett, 1935-36 president of the Association and later member of the Board of Regents, observed:

I think you have to look at the background of the time of 1936. Most of the students there were usually there at great sacrifice on the part of their parents or the students themselves....

[T]he great majority of students at that time worked part of their way through, and many of them all the way through...and I think the general attitude at that time was, "I've come to the University here to get an education," and you didn't have so much an attitude of questioning "What are students rights?" It was more a matter of "I want an education, and I want out as soon as I can."<sup>3</sup>

### Major Projects

That is not to say, however, that nothing of significance was accomplished by the Students' Association between 1932 and 1940. One of its greatest achievements was the organization of the Student Union system during the 1932-33 administration of Allan Shivers. The new building had already been constructed; in March of 1933, Shivers appointed the first Union Board of Directors of five students (a chairman and four members) and a nonvoting faculty advisor, which had complete responsibility for and control over the Union's operations.<sup>4</sup> The Students' Assembly simultaneously passed several bills that created a \$4,000 reserve from student government funds for emergency use by the Union Board, gave 95% of the Association's dance profits to maintaining the Union (with the other 5% continuing to accrue to the Association), and placed the Cultural Entertainment Committee--heretofore a branch of the Association--under supervision of the Board.<sup>5</sup> The next fall, furnishings for the lounge and the ballroom of the Union were purchases with money in the Texas Union Trust Fund.<sup>6</sup>

In the fall of 1934, Dr. E.P. Schoch, professor of

chemistry and faculty sponsor of the Band, called upon the Assembly, as representative of the entire student body, to serve as a board of arbitration between it and the Athletics Council. The Council had refused to fund the Band for trips to out of town games, and the Band's small Blanket tax appropriation left no alternative for the musicians but to miss the games completely. Through the Assembly's intervention, a compromise agreement was reached.<sup>7</sup>

The 1935-36 term of Jenkins Garrett saw another program of enduring value. The Association sought, and later secured through the efforts of Assemblyman Ed Nunnally, ownership of the copyright to "The Eyes of Texas," penned over 30 years earlier by UT student John Lang Sinclair.<sup>8</sup> This copyright later earned the Association a considerable amount of then badly-needed funding.

During the 1936-37 school year, the faculty suddenly imposed censorship on the Daily Texan. Students were outraged; Student body president "Cousin" Jimmie Brinkley charged that "censorship amounts to actual suspension of the rights of student government."<sup>9</sup> The Assembly reacted by submitting the faculty's move to the students for "approval." Students voted against censorship by an almost three-to-one margin,<sup>10</sup> and the restrictions were soon lifted. That spring, the entire campus was deeply saddened by the death in May of University President H.Y. Benedict, and the students' great sense of loss was conveyed in the Assembly's message of condolence to the President's family: "The cooperation, the



fairness, and the kindness that he has always shown to the student body have endeared him to the thousands of students of the University to which he has meant so much."<sup>11</sup> Much discussion in the newly-elected Assembly centered around a memorial to Benedict, the only U. T. President ever to die in office, and the only ex-student at that time ever to rise to the presidency.<sup>12</sup> The Students' Association soon afterwards established the Benedict Memorial Foundation, to provide an award each year to an outstanding student selected by a panel of three administrators and four students.<sup>13</sup>

Perhaps the first time that the Association attempted seriously to wield in an organized fashion its constituted authority over student services was in the investigation of the University of Texas Cooperative Society under President Sydney Reagan during the 1939-40 school year. Students had long suspected that the Co-Op had significant managerial, financial, and operational problems and inconsistencies; an Association ad hoc committee had been appointed under President Shivers "to make a thorough investigation of the policies" of the Co-Op, but apparently, a report was never made.<sup>14, 15</sup> In 1935, the Co-Op rebate system was abolished, and the price paid for buy-backs of used books was reduced from 75% to 60% of new.<sup>16</sup> Then, on October 25, 1939, the Intercooperative Council, an organization that promoted student cooperatives, petitioned the Students' Assembly to begin an investigation of the Co-Op

...to determine the possibilities of operating it as a genuine cooperative society according to the Rochdale principles of cooperation. It is the opinion of the Council that the Society is not operated as such at the present time in light of the fact that a neighboring private establishment of similar nature is able to compete and operate profitably with practically identical prices. We believe that the students could profit more from the Society than they are at present.<sup>17</sup>

The Assembly committee appointed by Reagan proceeded to conduct a highly professional, methodical probe. They questioned the manager, president, and directors of the Co-Op; studied audit reports and questioned the auditor; questioned present and past employees; questioned students on their complaints and suggestions; discussed the Co-Op with faculty experts in various areas, such as Law; and studied the charter, Board meeting Minutes, and original books of account of the Co-Op, along with the store and its operations in general.<sup>18</sup> The Committee's attempts to hold open meetings were thwarted by a resolution of the Co-Op Board, forbidding its manager to testify in open hearings;<sup>19</sup> Reagan pointed out that "based on the information that I had he was wise to take the Fifth Amendment."<sup>20</sup> The manager, Ed Rather, finally consented to testify in closed hearings.

The 178 page report that the Committee produced was detailed and thorough. It incorporated 33 specific recommendations, including (1) that the Co-Op purchase all discarded texts at any time on the basis of their value in the book market; (2) that advertising be limited principally to educational ads informing students of the Co-Op's policies and operations, so as to materially reduce advertising costs; (3) that special

discounts and special orders for persons not directly connected with the University be abolished; (4) that the practice of paying the manager a percentage of net profits be suspended, as it encouraged high markups; (5) that the Co-Op should operate more upon the Rochdale Principles of Cooperation, particularly, giving rebates to members and basing the amount of those rebates on the member's purchases; (6) that the entire profits for the year should be returned to the members until there was a need for additional working capital; (7) that Manager Ed Rather answer to the Board for his mismanagement, specifically, for dismissing three Co-Op employees without cause who moved out of apartments he owned, for using hourly employees "on Co-Op time frequently as his and his family's personal servants," and for "often using the full-time janitor...for personal garden, car, and house work while on Co-Op time"--and that the Board take appropriate action; and (8) that the management and Board of Directors adopt a policy of full disclosure to its members of its policies and actions.<sup>21</sup>

And what came of all that work? The Co-Op eventually answered only 17 of the 33 recommendations and ignored the critically important rebate system entirely. Remembers Reagan:

I'm not sure anything came of it. We had two students on the Co-Op Board of Directors, but the administration dominated that board, and the chairman took a real hard-nosed attitude on this thing, and he wouldn't even speak to me after that investigation.<sup>22</sup>

And Mr. Rather was retained as manager, and everything continued as it was?

Oh, absolutely; that's right. You see, the

person that followed me as president, J. Ward Fouts, was not sympathetic with this. There was no follow-through; this was one of the problems on many of these things.<sup>23</sup>

However, Reagan later noted:

[W]e made the entire establishment a damn sight more cautious in the way they operated. They knew that they might have the whistle blown on them; that was the first time, at least since I'd been around the campus.<sup>24</sup>

### Structure and Role of the Students' Assembly

By 1932, the enumerated powers of the Assembly were to elect each year one student to the athletic council and two to the Board of Student Publications, to appropriate all Association monies, to control arrangements for all student celebrations and functions, and to "enact all laws, pursuant to the Constitution, necessary and proper for the general welfare of the student body."<sup>25</sup> Except for the major programs listed above, however, there was little activity carried out under the potentially powerful "necessary and proper" clause: for example, in 1938-39, there were, altogether, two resolutions and four bills introduced in the Assembly. And, as Dean of Student Life V.I. Moore rather bluntly warned in 1936, "It must be understood that all actions of the Students' Assembly are subject to the approval of the administration, since the Students' Association derives its entire authority from the Board of Regents."<sup>26</sup>

The Assembly itself was composed of representatives elected from the eight schools and departments--Arts and Sciences, Law, Journalism, Pharmacy, Education, Business Administration, and the Graduate School. Seats were apportioned, as today,

on a proportional basis, with Arts and Sciences and Engineering consistently garnering the greatest number; the total size of the Assembly varied from 17 to 22 members.<sup>27</sup> The committee structure in the Assembly was quite fluid, with virtually no "standing committees" that lasted more than a year or two; most committees were appointed ad hoc, such as the Committee to Investigate the Cost of Living on Campus, and the Christmas Party Committee.

### Structural Changes in the Students' Association

One of the tendencies that we will observe throughout the history of the Association was the perceived need to rewrite or substantially amend the constitution every few years: in the period from 1932 to 1940, the document underwent at least three major alterations. An entirely new constitution had been adopted early in 1932. However, it evidently lacked sufficient flexibility to adapt to the changing requirements of the students and the University environment; in the spring of 1934, it was necessary to amend the constitution in order to place dances under the control of a Dance Committee instead of the Assembly, reduce censorship of the Longhorn-Ranger humor magazine and the Cactus yearbook, redistribute assembly representation among the colleges, and institute a student appeals board above the Judiciary Council.<sup>28</sup> Only five years later, 1937-38 President J.J. "Jake" Pickle said that "in many instances this...instrument has proved inadequate to cope with the situations confronting it, and to have a smooth-running program there must be a change."<sup>29</sup> After more than a year of committee work, the entirely rewritten

constitution--which raised the requirements for holding office, eliminated many ambiguities, and followed a more coherent outline--was adopted by the Assembly and ratified by the student body.<sup>30</sup>

One more important change occurred during the decade: on April 26, 1938, the Assembly voted to pay its president a salary of \$30.00 per month during the Long Session.<sup>31</sup> Many students had long opposed such a move; they were afraid that, in view of the financial distress created for students by the Depression, the people would be running for the position for the salary, rather than to serve the student body.<sup>32</sup>

#### Parties and Elections

Voter interest in the thirties was high by today's standards, although it had dropped somewhat after the student body grew too big to meet in the auditorium and vote en masse. Turnout for the spring election, in which the president, vice-president, secretary and publications editors were chosen, ranged between 60% and 74% of the student body; turnouts for the less exciting Assembly elections in the fall were considerably lower, typically 34% to 42%.

The variance in turnout from year to year is at least partially explained by fluctuating levels of political party-induced voter stimulus. To be accurate, the term "political party" is somewhat of a misnomer, for although there was a clear political division between the Greek social organization community and the independent, non-affiliated students, the two groups were not yet organized into parties as such. However,

the members of the Greek "Clique," as the group was collectively called, had the needed candidacy-furthering machinery readily available in the inherent organization of their fraternities and sororities. The independents, also known as the "barbarians" or "Barbs," and the "unwashed," lacked such a machine, and consequently, the Clique-endorsed candidates tended to win a majority of the Assembly seats. Some independent candidates for president were quite successful in their campaigns nevertheless, including "Cousin" Jimmie Brinkley in 1936, "Jake" Pickle in 1937, John Connally in 1938, and Sydney Reagan in 1939. All were able to put together political machines that overwhelmed the Clique's efforts. But the independent presidents' winning streak ended in 1940, with the election of Clique candidate J. Ward Fouts.<sup>33</sup>

The Clique-Barb division was largely a device to help candidates get elected. As such, the intensity level of competition between the groups influenced voter interest: when rivalry was clearly evident and candidate loyalties obvious, turnout was high. Conversely, if the intergroup conflict was less active, as in the fall of 1937 Assembly elections, light turnouts were seen--in this instance, only 2,200<sup>34</sup> of 9,370<sup>35</sup> enrolled. Group loyalties did not carry over as strongly into the working Assembly, and most people tried to take a more University-wide view.<sup>36</sup> However, there were some instances in which the split surfaced to entangle itself in Assembly business, as in 1936, when (the Texan charged) the appointments to the Co-Op Board, in the longest meeting of the year, came down to a battle of Jenkins Garrett's fraternity faction versus Vice-President

Harvey Pulliam's anti-Clique group.<sup>37</sup>

Jimmie Brinkley, the first independent president in many years, made a highly controversial move to disassemble the Clique Machine by proposing that the spring election ballot be split into "fraternity" and "independent" columns. This idea led to Austin's first sit-down strike. Six sorority girls marched into President Brinkley's office and vowed to sit it out with Cousin Jimmie until they got their way with the ballot. One Delta Delta Delta said to him, "I think it's a dirty shame the way you are acting. It's discriminating against fraternities and sororities." Jimmie replied, "Then get more members in your 'little clubs.' I'm just taking school politics out in the open so that people can tell who they are voting for. And please scram out of my office." The girls surrounded his desk and dared him to throw them out. Stumped, Brinkley reached for the telephone and threatened to call the cops; one girl weakened and left, and soon, "five girls got jammed in the door trying to get out."<sup>38</sup> All of Cousin Jimmie's perseverance was for naught, however: the next day, the Greek dominated Assembly passed a bill forbidding any identification by party, or anything else but name, on all future election ballots.<sup>39</sup>

There were, of course, some students who were able to see through or ignore the fraternity-independent rivalry. In an election-day "get-out-and-vote" article in 1937, a particularly astute Texan editor wrote:

A lot of good, well-meant votes are going to go to waste simply because we're still, by and large, a pack of school-kids who go into a steam-heated sweat over the presence or absence of a portion of



a 3,000 year-old alphabet.

When we come right down to it, do we really believe that this is the all-important line which makes us think, which labels us patriot or traitor, saint or heretic?

When we go to the polls this morning, why not ask ourselves "What difference does it really make?"<sup>40</sup>

#### Relationships with the Faculty, Administration and Regents

Students served on very few University-wide committees. The student body president acted as chairman of the Texas Student Publications Board and was a member of the Athletics Council; additionally, there was another student on the TSP Board, three on the Union Dance Committee, two on the Committee on Musical Organizations, and two on the Cultural Entertainment Committee.<sup>41</sup> But these student activity-related groups aside, students had no direct, significant input into the University committee decision-making network; this fact was just an accepted part of campus life until the late 1960s. Similarly, the students had no voice in non-student appointments and selections, such as for deans or higher administrative or faculty posts;<sup>42</sup> if they had asked for such power, Reagan noted, the administration "would have told us, 'look, bud, it's none of your business who we appoint.'"<sup>43</sup>

Relationships between the Students' Association and the faculty were limited, but each group maintained a largely laissez-faire attitude toward the other, as President Jake Pickle reported in a 1938 discussion entitled "Does Student Government Have any Power?":

There has been no real split between the students and the faculty in the University of Texas. A faculty sponsor exists in the Students Assembly, but no attempt whatsoever is made to intervene in student governmental affairs, and real student government is in existence. Students are given the opportunity and advantage of running their own affairs. They have the power to control their own destinies to a very great extent. Such a system has allowed the students to interest themselves in their own behalf and for their own well-being.<sup>44</sup>

Interaction with the administration, on the other hand, was always unavoidably necessary. This relationship was carried on mainly between the Students' Association president and one or more administrators whom he felt comfortable working with on an informal basis. The President's "party" affiliation apparently played a large role in his selection of University contacts: Jenkins Garrett, a fraternity man, remembers nothing but "helpfulness" on his programs in working almost exclusively with Assistant Dean of Men Arno "Shorty" Nowotny and Presidential Assistant William McGill--both of whom were strong supporters of the Clique.<sup>45</sup> But Sydney Reagan, an independent, describes a different view: he saw Nowotny and McGill as part of the "old establishment" that ran things at the University--McGill was a "fixer," he noted, and as for Dean Shorty, "I could not go to Nowotny, because you either did it Arno's way or he would say you were a Bolshevik."<sup>46</sup> Instead, Reagan's relationship was primarily with the new University president, Dr. Homer Price Rainey,

...and I was able to work with him as much as a student body president at that day and age could work with a president.... [A]s he told me once, "Syd, you know I have problems, and so there's a limit to what I can do." It's the truth.<sup>47</sup>

In any event, there was little or no effective student input into University administrative decision-making,<sup>48, 49</sup> although there were a few instances in which student and faculty opinions were requested.<sup>50</sup>

The Board of Regents was even more distantly removed from interaction with the student government. When asked to describe the Association's relationship with the Board, Reagan answered, "Zero. In my entire time as president of the student body, I never communicated, directly or indirectly, with the Board of Regents.... It just wasn't done."<sup>51</sup> Shivers<sup>52</sup> and Garrett<sup>53</sup> concurred, although the former remembers being invited to attend the regents' meetings. In 1936, the Board did ask that a committee of five Assemblymen, and the Students' Association president ex officio, confer with them on student matters;<sup>54</sup> but this experiment apparently was discontinued the following year.

#### Funding and Control of the Blanket Tax

The activities of the student government were funded by a cut, ranging from five cents in 1932 to twelve cents in 1938, of the \$10.50 optional Blanket Tax. The Association was also responsible for allocating these monies, which totaled upwards of \$40,000 annually, among various student organizations, including TSP, the Athletics Council (to fund the football program), the Longhorn Band, CEC, the Glee Clubs, the Curtain Club, the Oratorical Association, the Boxing Club, and the University Light Opera Company.<sup>55</sup> Although the blanket tax apportionment as decided by the Students' Assembly

was technically subject to approval by the University Administration, changes were never made, and the students essentially had the only voice in the matter. Jenkins Garrett, however, remembers working out the apportionment not on the Assembly floor, but in a special meeting with representatives of the other blanket tax-funded groups (including himself) and Arno Nowotny and Bill McGill.<sup>56</sup>

In the fall of 1932, Nowotny suggested at a Students' Association banquet that the Blanket Tax Committee have a standing faculty member on it, purportedly because he would be experienced in dealing with the pleas of various groups asking for larger appropriations.<sup>57</sup> When the Assembly resumed session in January, an Assemblyman introduced a motion to this effect, but it was resoundingly defeated by vote of the body, and the students continued to possess effectively complete control over the blanket tax.<sup>58</sup>

#### Off-Campus Affairs

Until around 1936, the attentions of the Association were strictly devoted to activities on the main campus. In fact, after it was reported to the Assembly in a February 1933 debate that a student, falsely styling himself as an Assembly representative, had antagonized a State legislative committee during public hearings, the Assembly unanimously passed a resolution forbidding any student to represent the Association at any legislative hearings or debates. Said President Shivers: "It is not the duty of the Assembly to dabble in State governmental affairs."<sup>59</sup>

That sentiment soon changed, however. President Jenkins Garrett was asked in 1936 to testify and help lobby (successfully) for a change in the method of writing the appropriations bill for the University.<sup>60</sup> During the 1938-39 school year, the Assembly passed a resolution opposing establishment of anykind of ROTC units on campus and appointed an ad hoc committee to lobby the Legislature to that end.<sup>61</sup> And in 1939-40, the Assembly sent copies of a resolution expressing opposition to a 31.5% reduction in college National Youth Administration employment to the President of the United States, Texas congressmen, and the House Subcommittee on Labor and Social Security.<sup>62</sup>

That same year, with the ominous forebodings of another world war looming on the horizon, the Assembly, meeting in special session, sent the following Peace Resolution to the Texas congressional delegation, the Secretary of State, and the President:

BE IT RESOLVED:

We, the Students' Assembly of the University of Texas, do hereby express our opposition to the institution of war, and do voice our unfaltering protest against economic or military intervention on the part of the United States in any foreign war. We are convinced of the futility of the use of force to settle international misunderstandings, and our conviction is that the preservation of democracy in the United States may be contingent upon the maintenance of our peace. We expect of our national leadership a peace-making neutrality--not a war-inciting unneutrality. Such a leadership we will follow resolutely.

We call upon Texas students to observe November 11, 1939, by expressing clearly to those in responsible positions in the Nation, their opposition to the economic or military involvement of the United States in the present European conflict.

We urge such expression through personal communications with Texas Congressmen and Senators and with the President of the United States, as well as through group petitions.<sup>63</sup>

Students were understandably concerned, as they would be the ones to fight the war.

Responses from the recipients of the letters were generally favorable. But Congressman Ed Gossett--a former UT Students' Association President--wrote back a very bitter letter reflecting his own ideas of the Association's role, in which he charged the Assembly with stepping over their bounds. Sydney Reagan recalls:

I'm sure that if this had occurred in the late '60s, the students would have marched on Washington and lynched him. But Ed expressed the viewpoint of the right-wing then, that "Who in the hell are these stupid students to be talking about things like this?" Well we thought it was some of our business since...since...it was my generation that got killed. Many of my best friends got killed.

But Ed Gossett didn't! Ed Gossett finally retired from Congress, and then became general counsel for a major corporation, and then--after he got too old for any of those activities--he became a judge.<sup>64</sup>

Although such resolutions carried little weight since the students could not yet vote, they are evidence that by the end of the decade, the student body was beginning to find its voice in off-campus affairs.

#### Student Attitudes Toward the Association

Although the disillusionment that characterized some of the more recent eras of student government at Texas was virtually unheard of, students were not always pleased with the Association's activities in the Thirties. Daily Texan writer (and later, famous Dallas Morning News columnist)

Paul Crume termed student government an "anachronism," and editorialized that

most students do not regard it as a democratic government, for no government was ever democratic that was supervised from the top. Perhaps it is just as well that the Assembly is controlled by those who handle the affairs so much more ably.<sup>65</sup>

At another time, a Texan editor criticized the Assembly's marked lack of initiative. At the called meeting that prompted this charge, an Assemblyman had moved to appoint a committee to report on the advisability of dropping assessment of negative credit hours for excessive class absences, in the wake of the 1936 flu epidemic. The motion died for lack of a second. But when the mover informed the members that a faculty committee had already been formed for the same purpose, the motion was quickly re-offered and seconded. There was not a quorum present, so nothing came of it; however, as the editor wrote:

The point is that here was something that looked a little risky. It was something that appeared contrary to the existing order of things run by the officials. But as soon as it was made clear that the officials were themselves considering a change in cut regulations, student government sighed and said 'Why Not?'

This incident [was a small matter, but it] presents insight into something quite big concerning the existence of student government. If it is ever going to utilize its potential power or extend its scope, student government is going to have to do a lot more thinking for itself and a lot less waiting like sheep for the lead of the higher-ups.<sup>66</sup>

Perhaps reflecting a growing trend towards disenchantment with the student government's lack of power and initiative, and to demonstrate that "politics is silly as hell," 20 candidates, "not all of whom appeared to be entirely sincere," filed for the spring 1938 presidential contest.

It was predicted at one point that as many as 250 would eventually file, but to circumvent this mockery, the Assembly passed a bill requiring each candidate to post a \$5.00 bond upon filing, with \$4.00 to be refunded if and only if he polled at least 200 votes. The bond was later declared by the Judicial Council to be unconstitutional, but by then, most of the frivolous candidates had already withdrawn.<sup>67</sup>

Fortunately, some students proffered more constructive help. Amid the complaints of powerlessness, one editor pointed out two valuable but overlooked strengths:

Student government has the power of new ideas--an overwhelming power if really used. It has the power of expression of opinion--a power that has been sadly neglected, and has been placed in the lap of student government only to lie relatively dormant for many years.<sup>68</sup>

And another editor refuted students' grumblings with a plea for increased duties and responsibilities for the government so as to make it more meaningful:

From the opinion of the ordinary student one would get the idea that the University and the student body would be better off if student government were relegated to the junk heap. Such an opinion would be a tremendous error in judgement. Student government is just coming to the front....

Student government has only one important power today; and that is its power to raise various kinds of Cain.

Students feel that their self-government is not so good because an emphasis has been placed upon inter-class (fraternity-barb [independents]) and inter-fraternity rivalry. A little friendly competition is all right, but that should not be the only thing in student government. Not enough student participation in the real government of the educational, disciplinary, or administrative phases of the University is provided. Certainly such participation is not regularly invited. Occasionally it is, praise be.

And then frequently, the Students' Association



is reprimanded silently and openly for not "doing something for a change." What can it do but arbitrate between political cliques and parcel out offices...? Thus, in an effort to "do something," it does something silly, and the enemies of student government point to its failure.

Student Government must be given more to do. More ex-officio student members on faculty boards pertaining to education and curriculum policy is desirable; more student representation on its co-operative society boards must be granted; more student counsel must be regarded as valuable rather than the steam of "half-baked kids who are merely wanting to raise a stink."<sup>69</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

Provision and improvement of student services, fraternity-independent rivalries, constitutional revisions, desires for more power and input in decision-making--all were part of the Students' Association's focus on campus life between 1932 and 1940. But these emphases were to change somewhat in the next decade as the nation was suddenly thrust headlong into World War II, bringing new roles for students and student government to play.

## CHAPTER 3

Notes

- <sup>1</sup>Official Records of the University of Texas Students' Association (hereinafter cited as "Records"), 1932-1933, pp. 14-15.
- <sup>2</sup>Records, 1933-1934, p. 582.
- <sup>3</sup>Interview with Jenkins Garrett, February 5, 1983, p. 2.
- <sup>4</sup>Interview with Allan Shivers, February 9, 1983, p. 1.
- <sup>5</sup>Records, 1932-1933, p. 21.
- <sup>6</sup>The Daily Texan (hereinafter cited at "DT"), October 5, 1933.
- <sup>7</sup>Records, 1934-1935, p. 22.
- <sup>8</sup>DT, November 15, 1935.
- <sup>9</sup>DT, October 7, 1936.
- <sup>10</sup>DT, October 21, 1936.
- <sup>11</sup>Records, 1937-1938, p. 8.
- <sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 18-19.
- <sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 22-25.
- <sup>14</sup>Records, 1932-1933, p. 20.
- <sup>15</sup>Shivers, p. 5.
- <sup>16</sup>Report of the Committee from the Students' Association to Investigate the University Cooperative Society ("Report"), in Records, p. 194.
- <sup>17</sup>Preface to the Report, in Records, p. 189.
- <sup>18</sup>Report, in Records, p. 190.
- <sup>19</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>20</sup>Interview with Sydney Reagan, February 12, 1983, p. 7.
- <sup>22</sup>Reagan, p. 8.
- <sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>25</sup>DT, October 16, 1932.

<sup>26</sup>Letter from Dean Moore to Margaret Gray, Association Secretary, October 10, 1936, in Records, 1936-1937, p. 320.

<sup>27</sup>DT, October 9, 1932 and October 15, 1935; and Records, 1939-1940, p. 6.

<sup>28</sup>Records, 1933-1934, n.p.

<sup>29</sup>DT, August 22, 1937.

<sup>30</sup>DT, March 21 and April 5, 1939.

<sup>31</sup>Records, 1937-1938, p. 43.

<sup>32</sup>Garrett, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup>Reagan, p. 4.

<sup>34</sup>DT, October 20, 1937.

<sup>35</sup>DT, November 12, 1937.

<sup>36</sup>Reagan, p. 3.

<sup>37</sup>DT, March 13 and 15, 1936.

<sup>38</sup>The Austin American, March 11, 1937.

<sup>39</sup>Records, 1936, 1937, p. 32.

<sup>40</sup>DT, October 19, 1937 (editorial).

<sup>41</sup>Records, 1932-1933, p. 9.

<sup>42</sup>Shivers, p. 4.

<sup>43</sup>Reagan, pp. 6-7.

<sup>44</sup>Report of the Texas Student Government Congress (Austin, 1938), p. 11, in Records, 1937-1938, p. 131.

<sup>45</sup>Garrett, pp. 1, 3, 5, 8; Reagan, p. 6.

<sup>46</sup>Reagan, p. 6.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Reagan, pp. 5-6.

<sup>49</sup>Shivers, p. 6.

- <sup>50</sup>Records, 1934-1935, p. 209.
- <sup>51</sup>Reagan, pp. 5-6.
- <sup>52</sup>Shivers, p. 3.
- <sup>53</sup>Garrett, p. 6.
- <sup>54</sup>Records, 1936-1937, pp. 9-10.
- <sup>55</sup>Records, 1939-1940, p. 29.
- <sup>56</sup>Garrett, pp. 1-2.
- <sup>57</sup>DT, November 2, 1932.
- <sup>58</sup>Records, 1932-1933, p. 15.
- <sup>59</sup>DT, February 10, 1933.
- <sup>60</sup>Garrett, p. 5.
- <sup>61</sup>Records, 1938-1939, pp. 40-41.
- <sup>62</sup>Records, 1939-1940, pp. 21, 36.
- <sup>63</sup>Ibid., pp. 10 ff.
- <sup>64</sup>Reagan, p. 9.
- <sup>65</sup>DT, October 13, 1935 (editorial).
- <sup>66</sup>DT, February 27, 1936 (editorial).
- <sup>67</sup>DT, March 15, 1938; and Records, 1937-1938, pp. 35, 37.
- <sup>68</sup>DT, October 31, 1935 (editorial).
- <sup>69</sup>DT, September 18, 1935 (editorial).

## CHAPTER 4

### 1940/41-1949/50: War and Recovery

World War II completely altered the face of student politics. The Students' Association was, at least temporarily, not particularly newsworthy; the government for the most part went quietly about its "business of running a great campus community without raising issues that might split or antagonize the students.... After all, war is the paramount issue on the campus now and must remain so until the peace is won."<sup>1</sup> Student government accomplished a great deal during the war and post-war periods that insured a strong foundation for it in the decades that followed. But to a large extent, these progressive programs were realized without excessive fanfare, particularly during the war itself.

The emphasis on new, innovative plans began even before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. In what is probably one of the best-remembered achievements of student government at Texas today the Assembly first considered during the 1940-41 term the possibility of having a "University Infirmary" and appointed a committee to study such a proposal.<sup>2</sup> University President Homer Price Rainey and the Board of Regents expressed interest in the idea,<sup>3</sup> and upon student urgings, a mandatory University Hospital Fee of \$4.00 per semester was instituted in the fall of 1941 to fund the new building.<sup>4</sup> Construction of the Student Health Center had not yet begun by March of 1946, however, when the Assembly Committee to

investigate the Health Service found that among other things the Service, then housed in B. Hall (where it had been since B. Hall closed as a dormitory), had no hot running water with which the physicians could wash their hands. Furthermore, the Health Service had the capacity at that time to serve only about 4,500 students--woefully inadequate under the University's plans to expand enrollment to 15,000 after the war. The committee strongly recommended that construction commence immediately;<sup>5</sup> with continual encouragement from the student body, the new, well-equipped Health Center, with its full-time director, was finally completed during the summer of 1950.<sup>6</sup>

Another successful pre-war program was the experimental textbook exchange organized by the Association in the spring of 1941 to help fight unfairly low buy-back prices offered by the Drag bookstores. Students brought their used books to the Texas Union Commons; buyers paid whatever price the seller had set, and the seller received the proceeds less a flat five-cent service charge. The book exchange lasted six days and was run by members of the Orange Jackets and Alpha Phi Omega service organizations. This idea had been tried in 1935, but on a much smaller scale; in 1941, sales totaled over \$1,200, with the exchange earning \$40.55 and profit after expenses of \$10.00. But the intent of the book exchange, which continued intermittently for many years, was not to make money--it was to provide a needed student service. In this it succeeded: sellers' receipts averaged about twenty

cents more per book than the bookstores' buyback price, and buyers could purchase texts without paying high markups.<sup>7</sup> Yet other accomplishments of the active 1940-41 Assembly were an extensive survey of student labor conditions, and the institution of the six-barrel lottery system, still in use today, for fairly distributing football tickets to blanket tax (now Athletics Fee) holders.<sup>8</sup>

When the United States entered the war in December, 1941, the University was placed on an accelerated trimester plan to enable students to earn their degrees quickly and then enter military service. The Students' Association thus began functioning throughout the entire year; cooperating with the University's war time program, it centered its activities around promoting student participation in campus war courses, bond and stamp drives, mass convocations, and other events pertaining to the war. The Students' Association Campus War Council, designed to guide the students and the student government in these efforts, was for a time one of the most active functioning committees.<sup>9</sup> Typical activities of the Students' Assembly itself included appointments of students to the various student activity related committees described earlier, constitutional revisions for war time, administration and allocation of the blanket tax, printing of Students' Association Handbooks for incoming freshmen, and enforcement of campus traffic regulations.

After the war, the level of activity in student government suddenly jumped dramatically. More bills and resolutions

were introduced, and more meetings were held; the Association received greater publicity, and the number of students actively participating rapidly increased. During this period, the Association's committee structure grew swiftly, although most were still organized on an ad hoc basis for purposes such as developing the flash card/yell section for football games, and working to find shelter, clothing and food for the post-war influx of Displaced Persons.

It is likely that even more of enduring significance would have been accomplished by the student government but for the constant, frequent turnover of student leadership. During the war, many students either were drafted or enlisted voluntarily and left school on short notice; numerous others joined on-campus military and ROTC programs that, even for several years after V-J Day, often compelled them to leave campus before their term of office was complete. By the end of the spring 1945 trimester, for example, 13 out of 14 Assemblymen elected the preceding fall had quit school and left town.<sup>10</sup> For the same reason, many student body presidents only served a portion of their terms, forcing promotion of the vice-president, election from the Assembly of a student to fill that post, and finally the appointment of another student to the now-vacant Assembly seat: each Long Session from 1943-44 to 1947-48 saw at least two individuals in the presidency; one year, 1946-47, there were three.<sup>11</sup> And on March 8, 1945, resigning President "Mac" Wallace handed over the rusty, aging silver spurs--traditional symbols of the Students' Association



President's authority--to his Vice-President, Miss Anna Buchanan, who became the first woman ever to hold the post of President of the Student's Association of the University of Texas. After the meeting, recounted the Daily Texan, her newly-elected replacement "bestowed an authoritative peck on Miss Buchanan's blushing forehead, to become the first boy in history to kiss a president of the student body."<sup>12</sup>

### An Era of Constitutional Tinkering

It must have seemed to the student in the 1940s that the Students' Association Constitution was in a continual state of flux. In 1941, the constitution that had been adopted only two years earlier was again revised with a series of eleven amendments approved by an over two-thirds vote of the student body.<sup>13</sup> Then, in April of 1942, a Committee for the Investigation of Student Government was set up, on the advice of President Rainey, to "look into the existing form of government, see how it works, and change it if possible," based on the student government constitutions at other Universities.<sup>14</sup> The committee reported in Fall, 1942, that the constitution was "not geared for wartime."<sup>15</sup> With the fall Assembly election only a few weeks away, nearly all the members of the student body were ineligible to run for office: candidates were constitutionally required to be enrolled for at least twelve credit hours, but the trimester system limited the maximum load to nine hours. There was not enough time practically to allow for an amendment by student vote; the Dean of Student Life had the power to "amend or repeal" in a "grave emergency,"

but this office had been non-existent since the death of Dean V.I. Moore.<sup>16</sup> Fortunately, and just in time, Judiciary Council Chairman John Hill interpreted the constitution to allow Dean of Men Arno Nowotny to change the required minimum load to six hours.<sup>17</sup>

But this solution was only a temporary cure for the government's structural ills. The next fall, a new joint faculty-student Committee on Reorganization of Student government, headed by Dr. O.D. Weeks, Professor of Government and Faculty advisor to the Association, recommended combining the executive and legislative functions in a seven-member Student Council. This would have resulted in a commission form of government, similar to a city council. Some students opposed such a plan on the grounds that it violated the doctrine of separation of powers, and that it limited large-scale participation.<sup>18</sup> The new document that was finally passed by the Assembly, and later by a vote of just under 700 students,<sup>19</sup> was thoroughly revamped in minor details, but essentially unchanged in overall structure"; it was not the general overhauling that the Weeks Report had recommended.<sup>20</sup> Among its changes: it reduced the Judicial Council in number from seven to five and renamed it the Student Court; established the office of Attorney-General to advise the legislative and executive branches and act as student prosecutor; replaced the ad hoc Student Bureau of Investigation, an Assembly committee which had been charged with enforcing the election code, with the three non-office-holding-member Election

Commission, chaired by the president of Alpha Phi Omega; required voting in student elections by precincts, outlined by schools and colleges; provided for a salaried clerk of the Assembly to handle all records, minutes, and office work; and more clearly defined the duties of the vice-president.<sup>21</sup>

The ink had barely dried on the new constitution when, just two months later, the Assembly appointed a committee of four to scrutinize it for defects.<sup>22</sup> And after submitting to the voters four new amendments (only one of which passed) in the fall 1947 election, the Assembly set up in December a committee to rewrite the constitution yet again;<sup>23</sup> 1948-49 President Barefoot Sanders suggests that "in terms of student government, if a constitution had gone unamended or unrevised for three or four years, it was probably considered ancient."<sup>24</sup> After months of working jointly with the faculty committee on student government, the Constitutional Revision Committee presented the new instrument to the Assembly for approval.

But all was not smooth sailing for the constitution during the discussion of a motion to adopt it, as the Minutes of that October 28, 1948 meeting show:

The floor was opened for questions. Ben McDonald stated that he was against consideration of the Constitution by the "Lame Duck Assembly" and that he intended to compare the proposed constitution with that of the Constitution of the United States. While McDonald was talking, the president appointed four members of the Assembly as sergeants-at-arms [sic]. At several points, McDonald yielded the floor to Vernon Hulme for further discussion.

The president stated that he had no intention of letting McDonald make a laughing-stock out of the Assembly, nor could he see that reading the Constitutions were pertinent to the discussion. He

ruled McDonald out of order, since he was discussing the Constitution, and the floor had been granted to him for a question. He stated that he could not ask his question until he had read both the Federal Constitution and the proposed Constitution. The president repeated his ruling, and McDonald asked for a statement of personal privilege. He apologized to the Assembly for calling the Assembly "a bunch of trained seals" with an automatic voting arm that went up when the signal was called. He stated that he had never missed but one meeting of the Assembly, and that he was a duly elected representative from Law School with the right to read whatever was pertinent to the Constitution. He began to read the section of the Constitution concerning the requirements for Associate Justices, stating that he believed that all should be elected from law school.

The president ruled him out of order for wasting the time of the Assembly members and for conduct unbecoming a member of the Assembly. When McDonald said he objected to the dictatorship of the president, the president said he could take his seat or be evicted from the meeting by the sergeants-at-arms.

McDonald said that he wished to appeal the ruling of the chair. The president resigned the chair to Vice-President Mickey Elliott, and the assembly voted to sustain the ruling of the chair. McDonald left the meeting.<sup>25</sup>

Immediately thereafter, the Assembly approved the constitution, and it was ratified by the students in a special election on December 15.

### Elections and Election Reform

Voter participation in the Forties generally continued to be high, with 29%-69% of the student body voting in the spring, and 24%-45% in the fall. The large variance in turnout between elections was caused by many factors: during the war, participation was more widespread, probably at least partly due to the intense emphasis of the day on democracy and the democratic process; after the war, interest waned somewhat, and was reflected in lower turnouts. Bad weather on

election day was also to blame in at least two cases.

The war also induced the Assembly to vote in 1943 to cut the campaign expenditure limit for candidates from \$50.00 to \$3.50--enough to get a picture cut made for printing in the Daily Texan--for the duration, to conserve the candidates' money and critically needed war materials.<sup>26</sup> After the war, the \$50.00 limit was restored so as to stimulate interest in elections. And, hopefully to insure competency of candidates, the 1944-45 Assembly unanimously passed a bill requiring those running for president, vice-president, secretary, assemblyman, and student court justice to pass 80% or better of a 20-question examination on the Students' Association Constitution drawn from a standard list of 100.<sup>27</sup> This quiz continued to be a requirement for candidate certification until 1960.

#### Growth of the Committee System

Until the mid-'40s, Assembly and executive committees continued to be formed ad hoc, leading to a plethora of groups with extremely narrow jurisdiction--for example, the "Committee to Investigate the Possibility of Extending the Christmas Holidays," the "Committee for Repairs on Speedway and for a Parking Area," and the "Committee to keep the Assembly Informed on Housing and Efforts being Made By Ex-Servicemen, as well as more mundane committees to codify the Laws or (inevitably) revise the Constitution."<sup>28</sup> Additionally, students were appointed by the Assembly to sit on the recently-established Faculty-Student Cabinet, intended to

provide communication between these two bodies and some, albeit not much, input from both to the administration. Faculty cooperation varied, recalls Barefoot Sanders: some members were very receptive, but many "just didn't give a hoot about what the students thought."<sup>29</sup>

After the war ended, however, the campus witnessed a veritable explosion in both the number and the sophistication of student government committees. There were suddenly many students in the University who had things they wanted to do, but no vehicle by which to do them, observed Sanders.<sup>30</sup> The standing committee structure provided that vehicle. And at the same time that it encouraged a broad base of student involvement, the new committee system as it developed in the late forties also increased the power of the student government: it could have more influence in a greater number and wider variety of fields than ever before. The distinguished feature of the standing committees was that they were organized not to address one problem and then become obsolete, but rather to have ongoing influence in less problem-specific areas. For example:

- The Student Committee on Housing was established in 1945 to hear and review student complaints regarding landlord problems, act as a liaison between the student and the Deans of Men and Women, and select suitable counsel for the student if his dispute was presented for court review by a higher University authority.<sup>31</sup>
- The Co-Op Committee was active in searching out houses in which to set up living co-ops and in getting the administration to help in alleviating the post-war housing shortage crisis.<sup>32</sup>
- The Veteran's Affairs Committee worked to inform

vets of jobs and other services available to them.<sup>33</sup>

- The International Committee, composed of eleven students, including six foreign area or ethnic group representatives, was set up for the purpose of "the successful 'integration' of foreign students into University life...and the promotion of better understanding and acceptance of responsibilities by students, both foreign and U.S. citizens."<sup>34</sup> The council published a foreign student newspaper, and held international dinners and balls as some of its activities.<sup>35</sup>
- The Committee on Faculty Evaluation instituted a faculty rating system for students' use that was similar in format to those in use today. A small minority of the faculty objected violently to the idea, and student apathy in Arts and Sciences and Engineering caused the program to bog down; but it worked well in many other colleges, and continued to be used on a voluntary basis.<sup>36</sup>
- The grievance Committee channeled all student problems brought before it to the proper University authorities, after investigation. In one year, for example the committee got stop signs installed at the dangerous intersection of 21st street and Speedway; it also got more pay phones, wastebaskets, and pencil sharpeners installed in the men's dorms.

The Student-Regent Liaison Committee. In March, 1949, the Assembly made this a permanent committee--one which was to provide a "more intense feeling of harmony," a "line of communication," and an "accurate and instantly available source of information to the Board of Regents concerning current student opinion on matters before them for consideration."<sup>38</sup> The committee consisted of the Students' Association president and secretary, the presidents of the Interfraternity Council (IFC) and the Men's Intercommunity Association (MICA), the Texan editor, and one student appointed at-large. These students met with the Regents' Subcommittee on Public and Student Relations before each Board meeting to discuss issues

such as the Association constitution, investment of the General Property Deposits paid by students, interest in a University Press, and the needs of foreign students.<sup>39</sup> Former president Sanders remembers the regents' favorable response:

It turned out that there was just not as much reason for antagonism as everybody had always kind of sensed that there was. They were nervous about us...they were very ginger at that first meeting, and we were too; ...it was kind of a mutual exchange of information. It was a building of confidence as much as anything else...

I thought it was a good relationship.... My purpose was not so that we could all walk down the same road together. There's going to be a tension from the start.... [But] I had a door that I could knock on.<sup>40</sup>

The Council on Fair Business Standards (CFBS). The CFBS was organized in 1948-49 to check spiraling inflation in the University area, to promote better relations between business establishments and students, and to direct students to merchants who had the students' interests at heart.<sup>41</sup> The Council's first activity was a student boycott of campus-area barbers who had suddenly raised their haircut prices by as much as 100%. The effort was successful in forcing the barbershops to roll back their prices; Sanders recalls:

...It hurt 'em good. It sure did, because they came to see me. They said, "It's not fair," and I told them it's free enterprise; but...they came down on their prices. I had a hard time getting a haircut for a while, though....<sup>42</sup>

The CFBS quickly expanded to become the largest organized branch of student government: with 85 student members, it far outnumbered the Assembly.<sup>43</sup> The Council also expanded its scope: it proceeded to survey area cleaners on the basis of service, quality, and price, and awarded its newly-



adopted symbol, the "Steer Here" placard, to those that were found satisfactory. Soon afterwards, the CFBS conducted a similar survey of sanitary conditions at 150 restaurants and 17 boarding houses in the campus area; establishments meeting or exceeding 80% of the Council's standards received the "Steer Here" symbol of approval. This function became the primary job of the Council until the 1960's.<sup>44</sup>

The Steer Here program, as the CFBS came to be popularly known, wielded enormous influence and impact in campus area commerce. The cleaners leveled charges of "discriminating against the lot for the few"; those that did not meet the Steer Here standards clearly suffered a loss of business.<sup>45</sup> After several food poisoning cases were reported at filthy campus restaurants, the Assembly directed the Daily Texan to publish in a daily Steer Here column the names of those establishments conforming to CFBS standards, in an effort to discourage student patronage of the others.<sup>46</sup> Sanders commented, "I think we were probably a little out of bounds [with Steer Here].... If you think about it, that's assuming a hell of a lot of power..."<sup>47</sup> And indeed, the CFBS continued to be an extremely powerful tool of the students for many years.

#### Control of the Blanket Tax

Control over blanket tax funds continued to rest with the Assembly through most of the 1940s. In fact, during 1941-42, the Assembly gave itself the power to pass regulations upon all blanket-tax-funded organizations, and to fine them

up to one-half the annual amount received from the tax for violations.<sup>48</sup> In 1945, the Assembly significantly increased student government's share of the blanket tax for the first time-- from 9½¢ to 25¢--in hopes of strengthening the government for a well-coordinated, effective student body in the face of rapidly increasing enrollment.<sup>49</sup>

All of this power dissipated instantly in July 1947. That summer, the Board of Regents renamed the blanket tax the Student Activities Fee (though students continued to use the old name), made it compulsory for all students, and raised the price to \$15.00. Their main consideration was supposedly to make the fee covered under VA benefits (which paid only mandatory fees) for students in school under the GI Bill of Rights. Student government objected to this only mildly: true, the compulsory fee was burdensome to some students, but it meant ample funding for all student organizations. What the Assembly did protest strenuously was the fact that the regents simultaneously transferred all final allocation power over the fee to a special committee consisting of the Students' Association President and one other student named by him, the Dean of Student Life, the University Auditor, and a member of the general faculty.<sup>50</sup> For the first time in University history, the students did not have complete control over their funds. Student leaders anticipated trouble.

They were right in that prospect: the following year, it was reported that the Student-Faculty Committee on Blanket Tax Allocations made several significant changes in the

planned 1948-49 allotments as passed earlier by the Assembly. Particularly, the three non-student members, including Dean Nowotny, overruled the two student members in restoring a cut from the Athletic Council allocation. The majority report was accepted by President T.S. Painter.<sup>51</sup> From that time on, it was understood that the Assembly could draw up the annual allocation, but it was no longer the ultimate authority--if it stepped over certain unspoken, unwritten boundaries, the administration would all too quickly take charge.

The Administration: The Rainey Controversy and its Aftermath

The Students' Association had always had a good relationship with President Homer Price Rainey. One Assemblyman commented: "In every community there are leaders who tower like California redwoods over the rest of the trees. Homer Price Rainey is one of these."<sup>52</sup> Thus it came as quite a shock to the students when this leader whom they loved and respected was fired as President on November 1, 1944, by a 6-2 vote of the Board of Regents. Rainey had charged that the Board interfered in the authority of the administration and had, in 16 instances of "repressive measures, actual or attempted," encroached on academic freedom. But the Board's only explanation for their action was: "The interest of the University requires it."<sup>53</sup>

Students and faculty were outraged. Dr. J. Alton Burdine, vice president of the University, termed the dismissal "the greatest tragedy in the annals of American education."<sup>54</sup>

In order that the Board's act not pass unnoticed, the Students' Assembly declared a three-day strike on classes, and students later resumed their studies only under protest. Led by the student government, students marched en masse on the Capitol in "howling protest" of the Rainey ouster. They deposited a crepe-shrouded coffin labelled "academic freedom" over the rotunda floor mosaic. Amid shouts of "We Want Rainey!" Student Body President "Mac" Wallace demanded Governor Coke Stevenson to request the Board to further justify its action, and promised to "bombard the regents with telegrams if [he] did not act." But no such explanation was received, even after the students fulfilled their threat.<sup>55</sup> The protest movement received news coverage nationwide; however, Rainey was not rehired. As we will observe again later, there is very little that can change a decision of the University Board of Regents once it has been arrived at--especially if it is publicly criticized, lest the Board members lay themselves open to charges of bowing to outside influences.

The campus was dealt yet a second blow seven months later. Dr. T.S. Painter, when he was elevated by the Board to the acting presidency of the University after Rainey was fired, had stated, "I do not approve of the action of the Board of Regents in summarily discharging Dr. Rainey," and said he would accept the presidency only temporarily, in order that the way might be kept open for Rainey's reappointment.<sup>56</sup> But on May 24, 1946, the Board asked Painter to accept the permanent presidency. Within three hours of the Board of Regents'

announcement, the Students' Assembly was meeting in special session to issue a statement to T.S. Painter. The student leaders urged Painter to decline the appointment: they felt that, although he was a brilliant and accomplished scientist, he lacked the skills and national prominence in educational administration needed in this case to again make Texas one of the nation's top universities.<sup>57</sup> Nonetheless, Dr. Painter accepted the post a few days later. Resigned to the inevitable, the Assembly on June 6, 1946, passed a resolution which was sent to the University President's office:

Realizing that there have been differences of opinions concerning policies and personalities, we, the Student Assembly, cognizant that ours is the duty of giving voice to the considered opinions of the student body, do herewith pledge all our effort and co-operation to the administration of this University toward the goal of making the University of Texas one of the nation's finest educational institutions.<sup>58</sup>

By the late Forties, student-administration-regent warfare had died down. The student government established an effective liaison with the administration, and with the President's help succeeded in getting a sidewalk built on the east side of Speedway between 22nd and 25th streets <sup>59</sup> and \$23,500 in appropriations for improved lighting in the libraries and the Architecture Building.<sup>60</sup> Barefoot Sanders remembers that in his term,

...we never had any big rows with the administration. I think people were kind of tired of that; it was the post-war generation; they were interested in things they thought were more basic.<sup>61</sup>

### Rise of Campus Political Parties

In the early Forties, the Greek-Independent rivalry continued in campus politics. An attempt was made in 1941 to organize both factions into a supposedly ideal coalition. This group called itself the Harmony Party, and managed to get two-thirds of its candidates elected in the spring 1941 contest.<sup>62</sup> The campus' first "party" was short-lived, however: in October of that year, the Harmony Party split up in favor of the old fraternity Clique.<sup>63</sup>

During the Rainey controversy, students became divided along "liberal" and "conservative" lines, with the former group (the larger) supporting Dr. Rainey, and the latter backing up the action of the regents.<sup>64</sup> In November, 1945, the University of Texas Party (UTP) was formed. The UTP was the first true party in campus history: it held a "convention," nominated a slate of candidates, and drew up a detailed 20-point platform.<sup>65</sup> But the UTP, too, succumbed to the omnipresent Greek-Independent split; students felt it was "a phoney," "too middle-of-the-road," and devoted only to "intangibles" such as "Home, Mother, and the Church."<sup>66</sup>

A multiparty system emerged briefly in the spring and summer of 1948, when two groups, the Liberal Party and the Independent Party, were formed to combat the influence of the Clique in the belief that the Greek-Independent distinction was artificial: "It should be discouraged in favor of intellectual affiliation," said a Liberal Party member.<sup>67</sup> Both parties held conventions in late September, adopted

more concrete platforms, and endorsed candidate slates; in the fall election ten Independent Party (which had changed its name to the All-University Party in an attempt to sound less partisan) candidates won, as well as four Liberal Party nominees and eleven "unaffiliated" students (mostly from the Clique).<sup>68</sup> But a permanent party system was not yet to be, for later that school year,

...they just went back to the old allegiances. It's easier to draw a line between Greeks and non-Greeks. Otherwise, you start falling out on doctrine.<sup>69</sup>

#### Growing Awareness of Off-Campus Affairs

As it did in the 1930's, the Assembly continued occasionally to address national issues; for example, in 1945, it went on record as supporting the 18-year-old right to vote movement.<sup>70</sup> Lobbying activities in the Legislature also continued sporadically: in the spring of 1945, the Union Fee was made compulsory by the Texas Legislature, largely due to student support.<sup>71</sup> But overall, the student government did not yet feel the need for regular, organized involvement in off-campus politics.<sup>72</sup>

There was, however, a growing interest after the conclusion of the war in worldwide and nationwide student organizations: in 1946-47, the Students' Association sent delegates to the first United States National Students' Association (USNSA) convention in Madison, Wisconsin; the International Union of Students conference in Chicago; and the World Student Congress in Prague, Czechoslovakia.<sup>73</sup> The following year,

the Assembly, following President Sanders' lead, established the USNSA on campus, subject to ratification of the organization's constitution by the student body. Discussion of the USNSA constitution dominated Assembly meetings and the pages of the Daily Texan. Ultimately, however--for the first of several times--UT membership in the USNSA was rejected: on February 18, 1948, by a vote of 2533 to 1874, the students resoundingly demanded that the University immediately cancel its affiliation. The USNSA opposition objected to defects in the organization's constitution that reportedly would have allowed a small group to dominate.<sup>74</sup> Adds Sanders: "It was thought to be a pinko-type organization.... There was just enough of a scare raised about the unknown."<sup>75</sup>

#### The Students' View

Students were often harshly critical of their government during the war years for its inactivity. For instance, the Texan editor described the 1944-45 Assembly as "the greatest do-nothing, say-nothing, leave-early Assembly in the history of the Forty Acres." He pointed out that it wrote one major law (which was vetoed by the Dean), wrote one major appropriations bill (redrawn by the Dean), and started one investigation which was never heard from.<sup>76</sup> As a result of the Association's failure to stay prominently in the student eye, indifference and apathy flourished: In a column urging people to vote, an editor described the average student as

sort of amazed and bewildered about what's going on.... His attitude seems to be, "Aw, what the heck. What difference will it make if Susie



Smith or Joe College gets the post? Student politics is just a farce anyway." And so he yawns his way through the political speeches and screeches, saunters past the voting booths with an I-don't-know-'em-so-why-vote idea.<sup>77</sup>

By the end of the decade, even with the increased activity and visibility from programs such as Steer Here and the Student-Regent Liaison, a scientifically conducted sample-controlled Student Opinion Survey of 535 students showed, with a 3% margin of error, that "4 out of 10 students believe the system of student government at the University does not render service of value to the students, but only 1 of 10 think that the government should be abolished."<sup>78</sup> Barefoot Sanders agrees: "I don't think they overrated it in the sense of feeling like it was always telling what was on their hearts and minds, and I don't think that most of them gave it much thought."<sup>79</sup>

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Thus, student government in the 1940s was characterized, after a period of near-stasis during the war, by a process of rapidly building major power foundations which would become critically important in the years that followed. It also established several new, innovative programs to benefit the student body. But even as the the Students' Association began to find "self-awareness" of its potentials and strengths, students were becoming more indifferent--towards the student government specifically, and towards politics and controversy in general; they were weary of war. This sentiment was clearly reflected on the campus as it moved into the 1950s.

## CHAPTER 4

Notes

- <sup>1</sup>The Daily Texan (hereinafter cited as "DT"), October 10, 1943 (editorial).
- <sup>2</sup>Records, 1940-1941, p. 15.
- <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 17.
- <sup>4</sup>Records, 1941-42, p. 5.
- <sup>5</sup>DT, March 17, 1946.
- <sup>6</sup>The Cactus, 1951, p. 20.
- <sup>7</sup>DT, January 15, 1941 and February 7 and 8, 1941.
- <sup>8</sup>Records, 1941-42, n.p.
- <sup>9</sup>DT, September 19, 1943.
- <sup>10</sup>DT, December 4, 1945.
- <sup>11</sup>DT, January 23, 1944 and March 9, 1945; and Records, 1945-1946 through 1947-1948, p. 1 for each year.
- <sup>12</sup>DT, March 9, 1945.
- <sup>13</sup>Records, 1941-1942, p. 30.
- <sup>14</sup>Records, 1942-1943, p. 23.
- <sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 40-42.
- <sup>16</sup>DT, September 29, 1943.
- <sup>17</sup>DT, September 30, 1943.
- <sup>18</sup>Records, 1944-1945, p. 377.
- <sup>19</sup>DT, September 22, 1944; and Records, 1944-1945, p. 3.
- <sup>20</sup>DT, September 21, 1944.
- <sup>21</sup>DT, October 11, 1944.
- <sup>22</sup>DT, January 12, 1945.
- <sup>23</sup>Records, 1947-1948, p. 76.

- p. 1. <sup>24</sup>Interview with Barefoot Sanders, February 11, 1983,
- <sup>25</sup>Records, 1948-1949, p. 34.
- <sup>26</sup>DT, March 12, 1943.
- <sup>27</sup>Records, 1945-1946, p. 47.
- <sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 39.
- <sup>29</sup>Sanders, p. 5.
- <sup>30</sup>Sanders, p. 3.
- <sup>31</sup>Records, 1945-1946, p. 10.
- <sup>32</sup>Records, 1947-1948, pp. 72-74.
- <sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 85.
- <sup>34</sup>Ibid., pp. 87-88.
- <sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 115; and the Cactus, 1949, p.24.
109. <sup>36</sup>Records, 1947-1948, pp. 108-114, and 1949-1950, pp. 57,
- p. 24. <sup>37</sup>Records, 1949-1950, pp. 91, 96; and the Cactus, 1949,
- <sup>38</sup>Records, 1948-1949, pp. 91, 93.
- <sup>39</sup>Ibid., pp. 511, 513.
- <sup>40</sup>Sanders, pp. 4-5.
- <sup>41</sup>The Cactus, 1949, p. 24.
- <sup>42</sup>Sanders, p. 7.
- <sup>43</sup>Records, 1948-1949, p. 233.
- <sup>44</sup>Ibid., pp. 45, 237, 248.
- <sup>45</sup>DT, December 7, 1948.
- <sup>46</sup>Records, 1949-1950, p. 81.
- <sup>47</sup>Sanders, pp. 3, 6.
- <sup>48</sup>Records, 1941-1942, p. 32.
- <sup>49</sup>DT, September 13, 1945.

- <sup>50</sup>Records, 1947-1948, p. 34; and DT, September 13, 1947.
- <sup>51</sup>Records, 1948-1949, p. 19.
- <sup>52</sup>DT, September 22, 1944.
- <sup>53</sup>Records, 1944-1945, p. 435; and DT, October 13, 1944.
- <sup>54</sup>Radio address by "Mac" Wallace, p. 2, in Records, 1944-1945, n.p.
- <sup>55</sup>The New York Times, November 3, 1944.
- <sup>56</sup>Radio address, op. cit.
- <sup>57</sup>Records, 1946-1947, pp. 44-48.
- <sup>58</sup>DT, June 7, 1946.
- <sup>59</sup>Records, 1948-1949, p. 77.
- <sup>60</sup>Records, 1949-1950, p. 74.
- <sup>61</sup>Sanders, p. 5.
- <sup>62</sup>DT, April 4, 1941.
- <sup>63</sup>DT, October 1, 1941.
- <sup>64</sup>DT, August 19, 1945.
- <sup>65</sup>DT, November 11, 1945.
- <sup>66</sup>DT, November 22, 1945.
- <sup>67</sup>DT, September 17, 1948.
- <sup>68</sup>DT, September 17 and 30, and October 1 and 21, 1948.
- <sup>69</sup>Sanders, p. 2.
- <sup>70</sup>Records, 1944-1945, p. 379.
- <sup>71</sup>DT, March 30, 1945.
- <sup>72</sup>Sanders, p. 7.
- <sup>73</sup>Records, 1946-1947, pp. 150-152.
- <sup>74</sup>Records, 1947-1948, p. 86; and DT, February 19, 1948.
- <sup>75</sup>Sanders, p. 7.
- <sup>76</sup>DT, December 4, 1945 (editorial).

<sup>77</sup>DT, April 25, 1945 (editorial).

<sup>78</sup>Reported in DT, April 11, 1948.

<sup>79</sup>Sanders, p. 9.

## CHAPTER 5

### 1950/51-1959/60: An Introspective Calm

Indeed, in the turbulent wake of the 1940s--particularly World War II and the Rainey controversy--University of Texas students were understandably ready for stability on campus. They placed increasingly heavy emphasis on academic studies, and education quickly became the top priority, especially for returning veterans who were eager to graduate and get jobs; extracurricular activities were, to a great degree, secondary in importance. For the student government, this trend meant a general loss of cohesiveness: students tended not to view the Association as a group in which they were members (which, of course, they were by definition), but rather to relegate it to the status of "just another activity participated in by those...who wanted to be politicians."<sup>1</sup> Voter turnout rates in the Fifties lend credence to this theory: only about 19% to 29% of the students bothered to vote in the spring elections, while fall elections managed to attract only 15% to 19%--both dramatic decreases from the preceding decade.

Harley Clark, Students' Association President during 1957-58, recalls what the students of the Fifties were like:

...Looking back on it, I do believe that generations have a general characteristic. ...I believe that our generation was very introspective--we were pretty quiet. We weren't terribly materialistic, but we were really concerned with human rights and general freedoms. We somehow missed sensing the right to be more outspoken about certain things; we were shy in that regard.... In a sense, that hampered some of our potential effectiveness.<sup>2</sup>

Student government reflected this prevailing introspective calm. "We were not a very controversial government.... We were still feeling our way as to what our appropriate place was.... We didn't do much, and we didn't draw a lot of criticism."<sup>3</sup> There were few if any great, divisive, emotion-packed issues such as those that appeared in later decades. In some years, the Students' Association exhibited a flurry of activity:

During the term of President Frank Cooksey, the Student Assembly was a resolution-passing, bill proposing body. Its effect may be questionable but the volume of discussion and deliberation is in itself impressive.<sup>4</sup>

During others, quiescence seemed to be the outstanding attribute, as the 1952-53 Report of the Student Court (usually a busy organ of the Association)--printed here in its entirety--would suggest:

The Student Court was in a very inactive status this past year due to the fact that no cases ever appeared on its docket. However, the court had one social event which consisted of a dinner.<sup>5</sup>

In years like this, most activity occurred "behind-the-scenes," making the process seem, to the average student, "like nothing more than a dull aftermath of a hot political campaign."<sup>6</sup>

But whether dynamic or not, student government in the Fifties placed its emphasis not on effecting great, earth-shaking changes, but rather on "keeping the place moving"--maintaining existing programs and providing basic, necessary services for the student body. And that proved to be no mere task on a campus with a student population that mushroomed to over 19,000 by the decade's end.

### An Explosion of Committees

To cope with this staggering responsibility, the committee system expanded with breathless rapidity: by 1952, the number of standing committees had grown to 19, and three years later it had swelled to 23. Meanwhile, numerous others were still developed ad hoc. Some of the new standing committees established in the Fifties were:

- The Rally Committee, formed in 1950 to further school spirit and student participation in a "color-card-cheering" (flash card) section at football games.<sup>7</sup>
- The Student Integrity Council, later called the Scholastic Integrity Council (or simply "SIC"), composed of students, faculty, and the Dean of Student Life, developed to initiate and advise integrity programs in student organizations and honor systems in the schools and colleges.<sup>8</sup>
- The Civil Defense Committee, formed in 1953 with representatives from service groups, living units, and other organizations, to inform students and faculty members of their responsibilities and courses of action in the event of an emergency.<sup>9</sup>
- The Student Employment Committee, whose purpose was to study, support, and--whenever possible--take action that might aid the working students of the University.<sup>10</sup>

In addition, many of the most significant committees introduced in the late Forties maintained their levels of activity. The Council on Fair Business Standards, rechristened the Prices and Sanitation Committee, continued the Steer Here program, distributing maps, showing locations of establishments passing the inspection, to dorms and student boarding houses.<sup>11</sup> The Grievance Committee handled complaints from students on housing, unfair grading and teaching practices, and difficulties with the administration; in 1956, it con-



ducted an extensive study of the undergraduate advising system, found it to be inefficient and understaffed, and suggested as a remedy the use of the peer-advising program which is still utilized today in some departments.<sup>12</sup> The International Committee also expanded its activities to help meet the needs and solve the basic difficulties of the over 500 international students attending the University.<sup>13</sup>

By the 1957-58 term, the committee structure had become a slave to tradition, with old committees never being eliminated: "We had a thousand...semi-vestigial organs last year...so we automatically have 'em again," quipped the Texan.<sup>14</sup> Worse, there were far too many committees and groups with overlapping or identical responsibilities, leading to power and jurisdictional squabbles.<sup>15</sup> The Assembly's solution? Why, of course--form another committee! Thus, the Committee on Committees was established in 1958, supposedly to improve communications between committee chairmen and provide better control over committee activities.<sup>16</sup>

Not suprisingly, this move served only to add confusion. In the spring of 1959, under the title "Mickey Mouse Politics," a Texan editorial assistant wrote that

The present arrangement is an octopus-like creature wiht a hundred dangling committees groping blindly in indistinct areas. More often than not a chairman does all the work and fair weather committee-men come long enough to get their picture in the "Cactus" or satisfy their sorority obligations.

A second problem is the complete lack of communications. A committee on committees has not solved the bureaucratic tangle. Groups often perform identical functions individually and simultaneously. Sometimes the reverse is true, each group fails to act, thinking or hoping that another com-

mittee will do the job.

Student Assemblymen consistently lack information on committee work. As a result, legislation is rarely passed reflecting the work of committees.

A "petition" to abolish the student government was circulated briefly; it was primarily a political move, but it did reflect a growing sentiment on campus "to brush away the existing bureaucracy and 'start over'.... [T]he present channels of communication (from the teeming tribe to the top of the totem) are pretty well clogged. Never have so few done so much for so many while so many did nothing at all."<sup>18</sup>

But anarchy was avoided. Instead, the assembly completely reorganized the committee structure, streamlining it so that efficiency could be improved and duplicity of effort eliminated. The many independent committees and subcommittees were placed in groups under the supervision of five Permanent Assembly Committees--Appropriations and Rules, Academic Affairs, Student Welfare, Campus Affairs, and State, National, and International (SNI) Affairs--with a Student Assemblyman designated co-chair for each of the five.<sup>19</sup> The Permanent Committees were responsible for investigating and screening all matters that might reach the Assembly as bills, correlating and coordinating the activities of the committees that they supervised, and keeping the Assembly informed of their workings at all times. By the following year, the committee system's operation and performance improved considerably.

### Integration

As Harley Clark reflected earlier, protection of human

rights and general freedoms was a prime concern of students in the 1950s. In 1946, Heman Marion Sweatt had been denied admission to the University law school because he was black; after a lengthy, bitter court battle, he was allowed to register in 1950, and all graduate-level programs were opened to Negroes. By that year, student awareness of the injustices of segregation had become manifest: in three popular referenda, introduced through student body initiative, the students went on record as not opposing admission of Negroes to graduate and undergraduate schools, and opposing any type of segregation in the classrooms.<sup>20</sup>

Integration of educational facilities proceeded slowly, however, and after the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its decision in Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education in May, 1954, the Students' Association decided to take action to speed the process. It set up the Desegregation Commission, composed of two faculty members and 22 students, including two Negroes, to study any and all problems of integration in the areas of housing, eating facilities, classrooms, laboratories, University social functions, and athletics.<sup>21</sup> At the end of the 1955 spring semester, the Commission presented its written report to the Assembly, Governor Allan Shivers, and to the Southern School News to inform other colleges of the University's progress.<sup>22</sup> But the Desegregation Commission was only a recommendatory body, and had disbanded upon concluding its report; during the following school year, the Assembly established the Permanent Committee on Human Relations, made up of eight stu-

dents and a faculty advisor, to implement the suggestions contained in the report.<sup>23</sup>

Student government was a driving force in the push to integrate the University, although as Clark points out, "We were not the only movers and shakers...; there were those in the administration who were cautiously moving the University in that direction...."<sup>24</sup> Even after segregation of undergraduate classes was terminated at the beginning of the fall semester, 1956, students continued to pressure the University to integrate all other areas as well, particularly housing and athletics, but the process was slow.

In the late 1950s, the Students' Association also turned its attention toward integration of off-campus facilities. By 1958, Negro students still were not allowed in restaurants on the Drag; on weekends when the University food service was closed, they had to walk over a mile to the Negro section of the city for meals. That fall, the Assembly voted to urge operators of all off-campus services patronized by the student body to open their doors to Negro students,<sup>25</sup> and by the following spring, some 21 lunch counters and restaurants had complied.<sup>26</sup> In a special session on May 4, the Assembly voted 19-4 to endorse the cause of students demonstrating against racial discrimination at the remaining lunch counters, and gave its approval to the use of all "legal and peaceful means" of protest.<sup>27</sup> And at the end of the decade, student government brought the collective economic power of the student body to bear on the issue: Steer Here added to its old rating areas

of food quality and sanitation a third criterion--availability to all students.<sup>28</sup>

#### Controversy over the NSA

The United States National Students' Association had grown in the years following its founding by 25 students in the mid-'40s to become a confederation of over 300 college student bodies, represented through their student governments;<sup>29</sup> as it began to attain national prominence, debates over the University's membership increased in frequency. Only two years after the student body rejected the NSA, a movement arose among a group of pro-NSA students to hold another referendum. In this instance, unlike the previous one, the Assembly remained dedicated to representing what it felt to be the wishes of the student majority, and recommended that all students vote against NSA affiliation for four reasons: (1) the membership dues and other costs required would have been prohibitive; (2) UT was geographically distant from the concentration of most member schools, making interaction with them difficult; (3) there were reports of the "unsettled views of some liberals" among the NSA leadership; and (4) the NSA's financial status was questionable.<sup>30</sup> Heeding the Assembly's advice, the student body once again voted a resounding "no" on NSA in the spring of 1951.

Three years later, in May, 1954, the Student Assembly--apparently without a student vote--officially affiliated the UT Students' Association with the United States National Students' Association for a one-year trial period.<sup>31</sup> The following

May, again evidently acting unilaterally, the Assembly made the membership permanent.<sup>32</sup>

For the remainder of the decade, active work with the NSA gave students at Texas a voice in national policy decisions and access to a wide variety of new ideas. But to a great extent, the NSA tended to emphasize more talk about what should be done than true constructive action.<sup>33</sup> In retrospect, this is hardly a surprising observation: it in part reflects the quiet calm that was characteristic at other schools as well as Texas during this period. However, by the end of the Fifties, students at the University were beginning to feel, quite justifiably, that NSA was a waste of time; they saw themselves "at the top of a very strong student government as far as United States universities were concerned," while most of the student governments involved in the NSA were to an extent less developed.<sup>34</sup>

Expressing this dissatisfaction, and citing the group's "organizational failure at the national and local levels, lack of flexibility, [and] precocious delving into the national and international realms of government,"<sup>35</sup> the Assembly on March 12, 1959, placed the University membership in the NSA on a one-year probation.<sup>36</sup> During that time, the NSA reportedly alleviated some of its organizational problems by opening new main offices in California and Pennsylvania, and it demonstrated that it had no "pink" tinge by passing a resolution condemning Communism and Communist activities.<sup>37</sup> The Assembly subsequently endorsed the Association's continued participation in the

NSA in March, 1960.

### Conservatism in Structural Change

The 1950s witnessed few of the frequent constitutional revisions and wholesale revampings of the governing structure that characterized the previous decade. This new conservatism was a result of several influences, including the absence of the turbulent events of the Forties, relative efficiency and durability of the 1948 constitution, and dominant anti-radical-change mood of the campus. Four of the changes that were made are worth noting, though. During the 1953-54 Long Session, the student government was "reorganized," or more accurately, streamlined. No amendments were made to the Constitution, but a few position titles were changed, and some duties were more clearly delineated; greater responsibility was also given to the President's cabinet to keep him and the Assembly members informed as activities and issues developed.<sup>38</sup> To keep pace with inflation, the salary of the Students' Association president was raised to \$100 per month by Assembly vote in April of 1955.<sup>39</sup>

The other two changes did necessitate constitutional amendments. The first required staggered terms for Student Assemblymen--half to be elected in October and half in April--so as to provide a greater degree of continuity in the Assembly. After passage of this amendment in spring 1956, a full slate of Assemblymen was elected the following October, and the new representatives then drew lots to determine whether they would serve for one or two semesters<sup>40</sup>--a system similar to the one

used in the Texas Senate decennially after district lines are redrawn. Finally, in March, 1960, the constitution was amended a second time, by a five-to-one student majority, to revise the student judiciary system. It became a three-level structure, consisting of a governmental affairs court of original jurisdiction overseen by the Student Court, with an appeals court composed of law professors to review cases from the Student Court.<sup>41</sup>

#### Establishment of the Two-Party System

The Greek-independent rivalry had abated somewhat in intensity by the early Fifties. Its primary role was as a political means of creating excitement and interest prior to an election; afterwards, suggests 1951 president Wales Madden, "the students really did not sense a lot of difference between an independent and a Greek."<sup>42</sup> The inherently stable Clique continued to provide Greek candidates with an easily accessible machine, while the degree of formal organization among the independents varied according to the strength and personality of the "party" leader. Consequently, the Clique almost always won a majority of seats in the Assembly, and often some or all of the executive posts as well--Madden for instance, was a fraternity man.

Spring, 1952 brought radical changes to the campus political arena, when a group of students "who had some definite ideals about student politics as well as realistic notions about how political ideals should be implemented" formed the Student Party. The Student Party was open to any



bona fide student of the University, and was dedicated to stimulating interest and participation in student government elections, and to selecting candidates, regardless of affiliation, based solely on their qualifications, past experience, reliability, integrity, capacity for leadership, and desire to serve.<sup>43</sup> The well-organized Party attracted members from all political factions, and scored an overwhelming triumph in the spring elections, capturing nearly every major campus office.<sup>44</sup> The Clique, while naturally disappointed, expected the Student Party to fade into oblivion after the election as its predecessors had done. But it did not--in fact, it went on to enjoy several more victories, forcing the liberalization and "clean-up" of the fraternity Clique into the Representative Party.<sup>45</sup> In order to attract needed support, "Rep." Party largely abandoned its "smoke-filled-frat house" approach to candidate selection, in favor of better and fairer methods which allowed broader participation from convention delegates. It also made provisions for backing independent candidates and allowing them party membership, even though the party was composed of fraternities, sororities, and one or two co-ops.<sup>46</sup>

Until around 1957, the Rep Party and the Student Party competed aggressively in campus politics. For the next few years after, however, the Student Party lost popularity and suffered a series of defeats at the polls. A Student Party leader described the problem in a letter to "The Firing Line" in the Texan:

We felt so strongly about our ideals that we were sure they would be accepted by the campus upon mere presentation. And for several years this was the case. But we learned a truism: Political ideals are not self-asserting. To become realities they must be worked for.

The fact that every bona fide student is a member of the Student Party looks good on paper, but in the hard facts of campus politics it does not measure up to the two or three thousand block of votes the other party can get without even campaigning....

The independent on this campus still needs to have a voice in the political level of student government, it is still important that co-ops and clubs be given opportunity to participate in a political party on equal footing with other organizations, and it is still a valid goal that Independents and Greeks be brought together within a political structure where the voice of each is respected.<sup>47</sup>

The Student Party Constitution was reformulated, and the reorganized Party helped put Harley Clark into the president's office in spring, 1957.

That was the Party's last major success. In February of 1959, believing that the Party was headed for "certain defeat in the spring elections," and that it was not "biologically, mechanically, nor psychologically able to perpetuate the ideals it was founded upon," its members voted unanimously to disband Student Party. A former Party chairman stated, "The form of Student Party has crippled us. Our ideals still live."<sup>48</sup> But ideals alone were not enough to make independent students powerful in a student government competition with the Greeks; with less than two months remaining until the spring election, the Texan editor pleaded for someone to "make all haste" in organizing a replacement for Student Party:

The gaping hole left is the need for an "opposition" party in the alchemy of "student government." The conflict of ideas and separate initiative of

campus interest of a two-party system is more than just good artificial practice for the political games to be played later in life.

The two-party system provides a continuity and a refreshing vitality for student government that no other "structure" can bring.<sup>49</sup>

His appeal was answered. Only one month before the election, 23 students--many of them former Student Party leaders--formed the new Action Party, promising "action" in making the academic life of UT the major concern of student government, in reorganizing the government, and in working for the welfare of all students.<sup>50</sup> Couched in less rhetoric was its immediate purpose: oppose the Rep Party.<sup>51</sup> (The Action Party, like its forerunner, was open to any student not individually affiliated with "another campus party.") Considering its late start, the Action Party was quite successful--it elected its presidential candidate, Frank Cooksey, and won two seats on the Assembly.<sup>52</sup> Rep Party was once again under siege.

#### The Blanket Tax and Supplementary Funding

The price of a blanket tax had risen steadily over the years: from \$6.50 when first adopted in 1916 to \$10.50 in the Thirties and early Forties, to \$12.10 in 1945-46, and then to \$15.00 in 1947-48 by direction of the Board of Regents.<sup>53</sup> In 1951, the Assembly recommended to the Board that the blanket tax remain compulsory, on the grounds that students were encouraged, because they had to pay anyway, to participate in blanket tax-supported activities. One of these activities, of course, was student government, and although the Assembly never ran short of money, the guaranteed funds certainly simplified

the annual budget process. Contrarily, the student body at large was in favor of reinstatement of the voluntary blanket tax; for the most part it resented the additional compulsory financial burden. The Board finally returned to the voluntary tax, stating that the mandatory fee had just been an "experiment."<sup>53</sup>

Almost immediately, the blanket tax price was raised to \$16.50, with student government receiving \$0.18; the groups getting the largest allocations were the Athletics Council, TSP, and the CEC.<sup>56</sup> Control of the allocation was more or less returned to the Assembly, recall Madden<sup>57</sup> and Clark; and although the latter remembers that it was still subject to review by the Dean of Student Life's office,

...it seemed like it was rubber-stamped. As I recall, I think we carried the resolution over to Dean Nowotny, and he'd look it over and say, "Well, this looks pretty good," and that's the way it would be, and we'd go on about our business.<sup>58</sup>

Then again, in accordance with the tenor of the decade, there were virtually no substantive or highly controversial changes in the allocations that might have precipitated a reimposition of administrative control.

The Association also had another supplementary source of funds: the aforementioned copyright to "The Eyes of Texas." Royalties from the sale, license, and use of the rights to the song increased sharply in the '50s as the Assembly began enforcing its claim through the courts, and the "Eyes" copyright became quite lucrative. The Assembly in 1952 enacted a bill providing for use of 50% of these funds for the

principal endowment of the new John Lang Sinclair "Eyes of Texas" Scholarship Fund, with the other half to be used for the "general benefit of the Students' Association as the Assembly shall appropriate."<sup>59</sup> Total proceeds during 1951-52 from the copyright were \$2,400, of which \$500 was paid out in five \$100 scholarships, \$700 was invested for the endowment, and \$1,200 set aside for future use.<sup>60</sup>

One can imagine the dollar signs that must have appeared in the eyes of the Student Assemblymen when, in December of 1959, actor-director John Wayne requested permission to use "The Eyes of Texas" in his forthcoming new film The Alamo. There was only one slight problem: the Governor, unaware that the Students' Association and not the University held the copyright, had already promised Wayne the use of the song--for free. Debate raged in the Assembly when the administration politely asked if the students would approve this proposal. One group believed that the publicity and honor that would be received were ample payment--after all, they said, this is John Wayne! The opposition, on the other hand, wanted to milk the film, which would almost assuredly be a box-office smash--after all, this was John Wayne--for every possible royalty penny. The controversy was quickly settled when Mr. Wayne quite graciously offered personally to donate \$1,500--the largest single amount ever received--to the Sinclair Scholarship Fund in exchange for permission to use the song.<sup>61</sup> The students accepted this as an equitable compromise.

### Interaction with the Regents, Administration, and Faculty

Generally, the Students' Association's relationships with the regents, administration and faculty were, due to the relative absence of strongly polarizing issues, characterized by cooperation and respect; they were also usually beneficial, to the extent that they were utilized. The Student-Regent Liaison Committee, for example, continued in sporadic use during the decade. It was reactivated after a period of dormancy by Wales Madden in 1951, and he remembers that the Regents were "most receptive" in discussing student issues such as housing and the blanket tax.<sup>62</sup> Dudley K. Woodward, Chairman of the Board of Regents, expressed similar enthusiasm at working with the students:

Unless I am greatly mistaken, the Board of Regents is very "student minded." In other words, we feel that the members of the student body are the most important "end product" of the University.<sup>63</sup>

But sometime before 1957, the Liaison Committee had again fallen into relative disuse; Harley Clark, who would have served on the committee, didn't recall having any working relationship with the Regents.<sup>64</sup> Then, in 1959, student meetings with the Board resumed again on an irregular basis.<sup>65</sup> There was simply not yet a pressing reason in the '50s to maintain regular liaison with the Board; when the interaction was in effect, it was more for the reason that "there was no need not to have that avenue of communication between students and regents," as Madden observed.<sup>66</sup>

Student government also enjoyed a relationship with the University administration that was both comfortable and

more continuous. The students' main contact was through the University President and the Dean of Student Life's office.

Madden remembers:

...we were blessed with really decent people as deans--Jack Holland, Bill Blunk, Arno Nowotny--people like that who we came to be very good friends with. These men were tolerant of our desires and our misunderstandings and our enthusiasm as students, and did not try to curtail things we wanted to do that were not destructive to the University.... At the same time, the relationship with the President was very comfortable: Dr. Painter was in office then... we had no problems whatsoever.<sup>67</sup>

Harley Clark recalls having a similarly good working relationship with the administration under President Logan Wilson, who replaced Painter in 1953.<sup>68</sup> Wilson also set up the President's Student Advisory Council, which included representatives from the Students' Association as well as other organizations, to foster regular student communication and input.<sup>69</sup>

Several projects were successfully carried out in the 1950s with the help of the administration, including a program to provide married student housing on campus and a request for construction of an open-stack Undergraduate Library (both with assistance from Dr. Harry Hunt Ransom).<sup>70</sup> Near the end of the decade, 1959-60 Students' Association President Frank Cooksey stated that "Student Government is far more effective than most of its critics think" in dealing with the administration, but added,

The degree to which the administration listens to the voice of student government does not depend as much on the issue involved as on the extent to which student government has the facts at its disposal.

Any student resolution must have a reasonable basis in fact in order to command the attention of

the administration. We are in a good bargaining position only when we go to the administration with the facts necessary to back up our proposals.

Our full-time jobs as students put us at a disadvantage. We have neither the time nor the opportunity for fact-gathering, as does the administration. Its job is to know the facts, and it has them more readily available.<sup>71</sup>

In the area of interaction with the faculty, the Faculty-Student Cabinet--composed of seven administrators, two faculty members, and seven students--was quietly active throughout the Fifties in representing student opinion and resolutions of the Students' Assembly to the Faculty Council and the faculty at large; and although not all the suggestions were adopted, some were, and the relationship was warm and open.<sup>72</sup>

Overall, as the Fifties drew to a close, students were becoming increasingly cognizant of the possibilities for student input in policy-making, as this excerpt from a Texan editorial indicates:

The trend in American colleges and Universities is toward more student participation in areas of curriculum planning, teacher evaluation, administrative policy, and academic standards.

The most important thing isn't that students have a vote or a formal say in such matters. What matters is that students are becoming vitally interested in the thing which most directly concerns them in college--the very process of education itself.

Herein lies a gigantic challenge: student government moving into a new realm. No longer is it a group that merely does school "busy work"--a group to plan dances and to promote school spirit and a gripe group.

Rather, it may now become a thinking group as well.<sup>73</sup>

#### Birth of Formal Lobbying Activities

Student government began in the Fifties to make itself heard off-campus with subtly increasing frequency and reg-



ularity. The Association first gave official recognition to this developing new role in 1952, when the Assembly formed the Public Information Committee (PIC), ostensibly to expand the University public relations program and broaden the area of contact between the University of Texas student body and the citizens of Texas.<sup>74</sup> In practical terms, though, the PIC became the very first organized legislative lobby of the Students' Association. The Committee restricted its efforts almost exclusively to external policy issues that affected University students: during 1952-53, it wrote H.B. 22, concerning expansion of the Texas Union, and lobbied for it; later, it helped with the effort to pass the University appropriations bill.<sup>75</sup>

The 1955-56 Assembly replaced the Public Information Committee with a new body that made no secret of its purpose: the Legislative Liaison Committee was formed "for the direct expression of student opinion before members of the Legislature."<sup>76</sup> The new Committee's focus continued to be on University-oriented legislation; but as Harley Clark remembers,

...we were absolutely pathetic when it came to dealing with the Legislature.... We'd go down and lobby, terribly ineffectively; as I look back on it, just awfully. But we'd go down there anyway.<sup>77</sup>

The Students' Assembly as a whole would also occasionally become involved in influencing off-campus policy-making. In October 1956, the Assembly appropriated \$360 from the "Eyes of Texas" royalties fund to send 10,000 letters around the state promoting a pending amendment in the Legislature to

allow use of the Permanent University Fund to finance new campus building projects, thus avoiding higher state taxes.<sup>78</sup> The royalties fund again provided needed monies in February 1959, when the Assembly spent \$500 to mail letters to 6,000 parents, urging them to write their legislators to ask for continued state financial support of the Student Health Service and the Intramural Sports program.<sup>79</sup> And in one of the extremely rare instances in which the Association involved itself with what Clark calls "worldly issues," the Students' Assembly voted in May 1960 to endorse the removal from the National Defense Education Act of the affidavit which required students to declare that they were not members of any organization desiring the "unconstitutional overthrow" of the federal government. The resolution as passed also directed the the Students' Association president "to use all means under his power to urge passage of the...amendment."<sup>80</sup>

As with input into University policy-making, the campus at the end of the 1950s was just beginning to appreciate the enormous potential power that the Students' Association could wield as a pressure group, in both national and state affairs.<sup>81</sup> While exploring this point, the Texan advised caution for future student leaders:

It should, however, be clear that the Student Assembly will lose its influence if it attempts to act on each and every issue confronting it in every single session. Care must be taken to select the most pressing areas. With concentration of pressure more can be accomplished.<sup>82</sup>

### Other Programs, Activities, and Accomplishments

As we noted earlier, the Fifties were not characterized by great, enduring changes or innovations. Both Wales Madden and Harley Clark highlighted this observation: when asked "What would you consider to be the one or two outstanding accomplishments of your administration--what lasting mark did you leave?" Madden, laughing, answered:

Oh, I left none.... It was a happy experience, and I believe that by taking the time to participate... I encouraged other people to get involved in student politics.... But as far as lasting mementoes, I have none.<sup>83</sup>

Similarly, Clark responded to the same question:

I can't think of any. I really can't. And I don't feel a sense of failure on that account. I can't think of any in particular....<sup>84</sup>

Exceptional humility? This is doubtful; of the 15 former student body presidents who were interviewed and posed that question, only two--Clark and Madden--could not think of at least one outstanding accomplishment during their terms.

However, there were several projects that, although perhaps not of timeless significance, deserve brief mention here:

- The Students' Association Book Exchange was so successful that, in 1951, the area bookstores were forced to pay 50% of the new price on used books in order to compete. Since selling books at a bookstore was more convenient for students than waiting for their money through the exchange, the book exchange closed.<sup>85</sup>
- The Assembly designated seven days in December 1951 as Blood for Korea Week, and conducted a campus-wide blood drive to get 5000 pints. The project was repeated annually throughout the Korean War.<sup>86</sup>
- The first Student Government Retreat was held during the spring of 1952 at Bastrop State Park. The Assembly members found the retreat beneficial

for quickly developing good working relationships, and one was held after fall Assembly elections each year thereafter.

- In October 1953, the Students' Association and the Union co-sponsored a Campus Leadership Workshop to train student leaders. A few years later the Union became the Workshop's only sponsor; much later, it was picked up by Omicron Delta Kappa Leadership Fraternity, which still conducts the program today.<sup>87</sup>
- By Assembly resolution, the first formal College Council was organized in the College of Education in October 1954 as an experiment to project scholastic integrity and help students plan their curricula and degree programs. The idea was later expanded to all the colleges.<sup>88</sup>
- In November 1957, the Assembly helped establish an all-University FM radio station (KUT-FM) with a \$1,000 donation.<sup>89, 90</sup>
- Also during 1957-58, the Association started the Freshman Summer Orientation Program, a three-day period during which incoming students were housed in the men's and women's dorms, given the chance to take tests required for new students, and allowed to attend special registration convocations.<sup>91</sup>
- The Students' Association Teaching Excellence Awards program began in the spring of 1957; the program rewarded and encouraged better teachers by letting the students voice their positive opinions on teaching at the University.<sup>92</sup>
- Also to promote academic excellence, the Assembly passed a bill in February 1958 that established a program to recognize the student(s) with the highest grade point average in each college and school through the presentation of certificates at Honors Day (first held in 1949) each spring.<sup>93</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

Toward the end of the 1950s, the student body began to become dissatisfied with the way the Association was representing its interests. In one instance, the Assembly passed a resolution asking the Board of Regents to provide private phones in all the women's dorms, only to find out in a

subsequent survey that over three-fourths of the women preferred to keep the less expensive central switchboard.<sup>94</sup> Another time, the Assembly SNI Affairs Committee recommended, and the Assembly approved, support of a tuition increase bill, pending in the House, that was designed to compensate for the effects of post-war inflation. The Association president and vice-president testified in favor of the bill before the House Committee on State Affairs. But only a few days later, a poll showed students against the tuition hike two-to-one. Controversy erupted on campus, particularly in the press; a referendum was held on the question, and students voted nearly three-to-one against the increase. When the Assembly refused to reconsider its decision, a suit was filed in the Student Court, naming all the Assemblymen as defendants and requesting a restraining order enjoining them from representing the resolution as the opinion of the student body. The injunction was granted, but the bill passed the House anyway.<sup>95</sup>

Amid disputes such as these, it is no wonder that students were becoming disgruntled and critical of the student government. A Texan editor probably spoke for much of the campus when, noting that student government had been suffering from inaction or ill-thought action, he wrote:

All that happens is that student respect for student government lessens more and more with each succeeding "generation" of politicians, because of the sluggishness and muddle-headedness with no attempt whatsoever to "represent" their constituency.<sup>96</sup>

Without a doubt, the introspective calm that typified the

decade was coming to an end.

## CHAPTER 5

Notes

- <sup>1</sup>Interview with Wales Madden, February 15, 1983, p. 7.
- <sup>2</sup>Interview with Harley Clark, February 17, 1983, p. 11.
- <sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 3-4.
- <sup>4</sup>The Daily Texan, (hereinafter cited as "DT"), May 11, 1960.
- <sup>5</sup>In Records, 1952-1953, p. 138.
- <sup>6</sup>The Summer Texan, June 26, 1956.
- <sup>7</sup>Records, 1950-1951, p. 69. (The first flash-card section had been organized in 1927.)
- <sup>8</sup>Records, 1952-1953, p. 52.
- <sup>9</sup>Records, 1953-1954, p. 43.
- <sup>10</sup>The Summer Texan, June 22, 1956.
- <sup>11</sup>Records, 1952-1953, p. 70.
- <sup>12</sup>DT, November 13, 1956.
- <sup>13</sup>DT, December 6, 1959.
- <sup>14</sup>DT, February 25, 1959. (editorial).
- <sup>15</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>16</sup>Records, 1957-1958, p. 82. (A faculty Committee on Committees was also formed.)
- <sup>17</sup>DT, March 10, 1959.
- <sup>18</sup>DT, February 25, 1959 (editorial).
- <sup>19</sup>DT, March 10, 1959.
- <sup>20</sup>Records, 1949-1950, p. 88.
- <sup>21</sup>Records, 1954-1955, p. 114.
- <sup>22</sup>Records, 1955-1956, p. 29.
- <sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 54.

- <sup>24</sup>Clark, p. 5.
- <sup>25</sup>DT, October 10, 1958.
- <sup>26</sup>DT, May 5, 1959.
- <sup>27</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>28</sup>DT, January 6, 1960.
- <sup>29</sup>DT, October 5, 1956. (Other national organizations of students had existed in the past; Ed Gossett served as president of one.)
- <sup>30</sup>Records, 1950-1951, p. 118.
- <sup>31</sup>Records, 1953-1954, p. 204.
- <sup>32</sup>Records, 1954-1955, p. 149.
- <sup>33</sup>Clark, p. 10.
- <sup>34</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>35</sup>DT, September 25, 1959.
- <sup>36</sup>DT, March 13, 1959.
- <sup>37</sup>DT, October 2, 1959.
- <sup>38</sup>Records, 1953-1954, p. 96.
- <sup>39</sup>Records, 1954-1955, p. 119.
- <sup>40</sup>DT, November 9, 1956.
- <sup>41</sup>DT, February 26 and March 17, 1960.
- <sup>42</sup>Madden, p. 3.
- <sup>43</sup>From the Student Party Constitution, in DT, February 4, 1957 (editorial).
- <sup>44</sup>DT, October 6, 1959.
- <sup>45</sup>DT, February 4, 1957.
- <sup>46</sup>DT, October 6, 1959.
- <sup>47</sup>DT, October 12, 1956.
- <sup>48</sup>DT, February 12, 1959.



- <sup>49</sup>DT, February 13, 1959 (editorial).
- <sup>50</sup>DT, October 6, 1959.
- <sup>51</sup>DT, March 17, 1959.
- <sup>52</sup>DT, October 6, 1959.
- <sup>53</sup>Records, 1957-1958, p. 308.
- <sup>54</sup>Records, 1950-1951, p. 152.
- <sup>55</sup>Records, 1951-1952, p. 51.
- <sup>56</sup>Records, 1952-1953, p. 129.
- <sup>57</sup>Madden, p. 7.
- <sup>58</sup>Clark, p. 6.
- <sup>59</sup>Records, 1951-1952, pp. 103-104, 107, 132.
- <sup>60</sup>Records, 1952-1953, p. 46.
- <sup>61</sup>DT, December 1, 1959.
- <sup>62</sup>Madden, p. 2.
- <sup>63</sup>Letter from Dudley Woodward to Wales Madden, in Records, 1951-1952, p. 934.
- <sup>64</sup>Clark, p. 4.
- <sup>65</sup>DT, November 11, 1959.
- <sup>66</sup>Madden, p. 2.
- <sup>67</sup>Madden, p. 4.
- <sup>68</sup>Clark, p. 5.
- <sup>69</sup>DT, November 20, 1956.
- <sup>70</sup>Records, 1957-1958, pp. 109, 112, 149.
- <sup>71</sup>In DT, November 22, 1959.
- <sup>72</sup>Records, 1951-1952, pp. 192-211, 260-267, 957.
- <sup>73</sup>DT, September 27, 1957 (editorial).
- <sup>74</sup>Records, 1952-1953, pp. 66-70.
- <sup>75</sup>Ibid.

- <sup>76</sup>Records, 1955-1956, p. 112.
- <sup>77</sup>Clark, pp. 9-10.
- <sup>78</sup>DT, October 26, 1956.
- <sup>79</sup>DT, February 13, 1959.
- <sup>80</sup>DT, May 25, 1960.
- <sup>81</sup>DT, May 11, 1960.(editorial).
- <sup>82</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>83</sup>Madden, pp. 8-9.
- <sup>84</sup>Clark, p. 12.
- <sup>85</sup>Records, 1950-1951, p. 28.
- <sup>86</sup>Records, 1951-1952, p. 60.
- <sup>87</sup>Records, 1953-1954, p. 66.
- <sup>88</sup>Ibid., pp. 167, 171, 204.
- <sup>89</sup>Records, 1957-1958, p. 107.
- <sup>90</sup>Clark, p. 8.
- <sup>91</sup>Records, 1957-1958, p. 153.
- <sup>92</sup>DT, April 5, 1966.
- <sup>93</sup>Records, 1957-1958, p. 133.
- <sup>94</sup>DT, October 24 and November 20, 1958.
- <sup>95</sup>DT, February 8, 10, 17, 20, and 21, March 10 and 19, and April 25, 1957.
- <sup>96</sup>DT, December 9, 1958.(editorial).

## CHAPTER 6

### 1960/61-1965/66: Questioning the Student Role

As students began to awaken from the rather sleepy Fifties, they started to ask questions, answers to which were not readily apparent or easily found: Who am I, the student? What are my rights as a student? What role should I play in determining the policies of the University that governs me while I'm in school? Should I have a voice in national and world affairs? If so, how? Student government was also searching for an answer to "What should our role be?", as 1962 Students' Association President Lowell Lebermann reflected:

There was a big debate over the concept of "Students In Their Role As Students"--what did that mean? Were student governments to take on the never-ending, cyclical kinds of issues of parking on campus, student publications, funding of student government; dormitory matters of hours, curfews; some academic stuff--you know, that kind of thing: campus issues that simply revolved around the campus community as such? Or, were we to be participants in the wider community? Were we to discuss issues of war and peace, of nuclear power; were we to talk about issues in the broader communities in which our universities found themselves? And strangely enough, that was really a fairly vigorous kind of debate--where should our emphasis be?

That was just an emerging idea at the time--that we could, as students, come together in a homogeneous group and have some influence; it was only just being examined.

The years 1960 to 1966 were a period of pre-activism at the University, perhaps best summarized by the theme of the 1966 Challenge Colloquium--"Campus in Ferment." Student revolutions were erupting at other universities, beginning after the Berkeley Revolt in December, 1964. Violence was

omnipresent in the news--the Vietnam war was beginning to intensify; President John Fitzgerald Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas on November 22, 1963; and, closer to home, sniper Charles Whitman in 1966 killed 16 people from the Tower before being shot himself by police officers. On campus, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and other student political groups began to speak out--still peacefully--on the draft and American foreign policy. And the fact that President Lyndon Baines Johnson was from the Austin area and to an extent considered UT "his" school put a national spotlight on the University's protests and progress in desegregation, elimination of in loco parentis policies, and so on. The campus was changing, and fast; and student government was forced to react to those changes.

#### Loss of Confidence in the Students' Association

The behavior of student government in the early 1960s did little to quell the tide of popular discontent and concern over representation that was inherited from the preceding decade. Much to the distaste of the voters, campus party politics increased in intensity, particularly after the Student Party was resurrected in spring 1961 from the remains of the short-lived Action Party and proceeded, in a frenzied contest, to elect Maurice Olian, who ran as an independent. Student Party was strengthened still further when Olian persuaded his fraternity, Tau Delta Phi, and several other Greek groups to withdraw from the Representative Party and join the Student Party ranks.<sup>2</sup>

The ensuing situation was often counterproductive to constructive action in the Assembly, for at this time, unlike previously, party loyalties continued to be explicit long after elections were over.<sup>3</sup> The Rep Party was still very much in control of the Assembly--in 1963, for example, it held 22 of 34 seats<sup>4</sup> and bitter political-infighting occurred. Wrote the Texan editor in 1963:

...Rep Party has, with a very few exceptions, gained "power" on the Assembly and has done nothing with it....

Student government is bad enough without being "managed" by a single group.<sup>5</sup>

Worse, many campus leaders and the student body at large viewed the partisan politics and petty squabbles in the Assembly with disgust, as 1962-63 Students' Association Secretary Barbara Tosch vividly expressed in a biting Texan editorial:

Student government at your favorite university is no arena of righteousness, no haven for majority rule believers, and no place to get anything but bitter about Democracy in Action.

The Students' Association legislative body, the Assembly, is a case study.

Too often the best of campus politicians--the one who seek office in sincerity, optimistically intending to "do something" for their fellow students and for the University--end their term in disillusionment, vowing "never to do that again."

One former Assemblyman, a Phi Beta Kappa who'd won by a landslide in the campus' largest college, resigned in disgust, saying "I think it's all a bunch of crap. Nobody does anything but make a fool of himself. They don't debate the issues; they just argue personalities."

Another representative, presently serving on the Assembly, describes his colleagues as mechanical dolls. "You wind them up and they nit-pick for two semesters."

A less critical student says he enjoyed his term. "I learned a lot about people. It was hard for me to get adjusted to the fact that what they say on the floor is not really what they mean--you hear that before the meeting . . . when friends or . . .

members of the same party get together and decide how many votes they've got to pass one of their bills or defeat the other party's. Isn't that the way it is in real politics?"

A viewpoint held by many persons is that Assemblymen don't really care about the issues--just whether their party comes out ahead. As a senior fine arts major, one among the two-thirds of the student body who didn't vote in the last campus election, says, "Why should I vote? Those people aren't interested in doing anything for us. They just want to play petty politics."<sup>6</sup>

Student confidence in the Association was undermined further by the impeachment proceedings started against 1960-61 president Cameron Hightower, charging him with five counts of malfeasance regarding his handling of money and the salary and duties of the office.<sup>7</sup> After four and a half hours of debate, during which Hightower said, "I admit to you I was careless; I admit to you I made mistakes," the president was cleared of charges by a vote of ten for impeachment and eighteen against.<sup>8</sup> Five days later, on December 13, 1960, Hightower resigned as a result of carrying insufficient class hours to remain eligible to hold office; he was replaced by Vice-President Maurice Olian.<sup>9</sup> This mid-year change of leadership and Lebermann's resignation (due to failing a summer school class) less than two years later were without question detrimental to the efficacy of the Assembly during those years.

Overall, the faith reposed in the Association by the student body was at its lonest ebb in years. Many saw student government as a sham; they believed, often rightfully, that office-seekers were more interested in self-aggrandizement than in serving their constituency, and they were dismayed by the Assembly's tendency to debate an issue to death with-

out ever taking substantive action on it. Lebermann admits that "yes, there was skepticism; people turned it aside with a wave of the hand, saying it was not effective, didn't amount to anything, was largely ignored."<sup>10</sup> This apathy was evident in steadily dropping voter turnouts, which hit a new low when only 3,482 of 26,230 students registered cast ballots in the fall 1965 election--a showing of barely 13%.<sup>11</sup>

The loss of confidence was so great that some students were ready to throw in the student government towel. Texan columnist Jay Westbrook wrote:

From the jaded elders quietly murmuring "To Hell with it," to Those-of-the-Fluffy-Heads loudly refusing to believe that it has lost its INTEGRITY, everyone recently has been uttering last rites over the shrunken body of student government.

The fact is that student government is sick--perhaps even unto death. The further fact is that no one seems to know or much care how to save it.<sup>12</sup>

In the spring, 1963, a student related a plan to "seriously, methodically, for a two-year trial period," abolish the student government. A spokesman for the abolition group said, "We see serious, concerned people trying to do something about student government when nothing can be done. We would like to put their efforts into something else, something valuable." Under their plan, which was never adopted, activities would have been handled by Greeks, independent organizations, and a governing committee.<sup>13</sup>

#### Creation of the House of Delegates

The future looked bleak indeed for the Students' Association. The only possible solution seemed to lie "in

getting these leaders in student government back in contact with the reality of student opinions, desires, and hopes."<sup>14</sup> In an attempt to do just that, a plan was formulated under the 1965-66 administration of John Orr for a bicameral legislative branch, consisting of the Student Senate (the old Student Assembly) and a House of Delegates. The constitutional revision group, including Orr, recognized that the Association was directing most of its efforts toward programming (which brought it into conflict with the Union Program Council) rather than toward the process of government per se. But they realized also that the Assembly had no legal role whatsoever; formal power was entirely vested in the Board of Regents. They believed that instead, student government could effectively use its powers of creativity and persuasive ability in generating and presenting new ideas to the Board and administration. And for that mission to be legitimate, they felt, it had to represent the students' interest.<sup>15</sup>

But the students themselves were not particularly interested in participating in student government, as we have observed. Only a small minority had a sense of "belonging" to "their" Students' Association, because, according to Orr, there were other interest groups to which they felt more closely aligned--co-ops, fraternities, sororities, dormitories and other social organizations with which they had day-to-day contact.<sup>16</sup> Thus, the members of the House of Delegates were to be elected from interest groups such as these on a proportional basis, in the hopes of "involving



key people...wherever they might be around the University"<sup>17</sup> who would be more representative than the "politicos" in the Senate.

But the new constitution was not ratified until April, 1967, and then only after considerable revision; John Orr never did get to see his original idea become reality. However, he recalled:

...toward the end I think there was a tremendous amount of frustration; I'm not sure if that concept was ever truly agreed with by a large enough segment of the population of the University to be successful. It kind of got halfway done.<sup>18</sup>

He was probably correct; as we will see later, the House was abolished after only a few years.

#### Taking Student Government to the Students

Another series of efforts to stem student disenchantment with the Association was conducted by 1963-64 president Julius Glickman and his vice-president Greg Lipscomb, who as president the following year continued many of the projects. Their overall goal was to take student government to the students--to get them involved, get their input, ideas, and criticisms, and in so doing, make them aware that their government was in fact interested in representing them.

One of these programs was the "Meet the President" forum, which the Texan dubbed the "Fountainside Chat" because it was held at the fountains in front of the Undergraduate Library and Academic Center (one of Dr. Ransom's pet projects, it was affectionately known as "Harry's Place"). Glickman told students: "People gripe about student government not doing

anything. This meeting is to hear your complaints and suggestions." For the first forum, about 60 students gathered and asked questions about student wages, housing integration, and registration; Glickman also was able to explain some of the policies of the Assembly. He said afterwards that he was pleased with the meeting and that many students would come to complain at an open forum that wouldn't bother to come to his office. "Meet the President" was held several more times.<sup>19</sup>

A long-lived program also started by Glickman and Lipscomb was Stump Speaking, an unstructured, weekly "battle of voices" where any person was permitted to air his views on any topic, including student government, and questions and arguments from the audience were welcomed. The program was based on the open exchange of ideas in England's Hyde Park, where speakers were guaranteed police protection and were subject only to the laws of the land. Stump Speaking was held on the steps of Harry's Place, and crates, in lieu of stumps, were available for speakers to stand on; if a listener got tired of a speaker, he could just drag a crate over to another area of the steps and begin his own harangue.<sup>20</sup> Stump speaking quickly became a popular student government-sponsored tradition, and like the "Fireside Forums," kept the Association in public view. It lasted until the early 1970's, when for some reason it gradually fell into disuse.

A third effort "to put the hopeless quagmire of student officials to practical use in terms of the desires of the individual student" was the Gripe Box project. The

locked wooden Gripe Boxes, located in the Union and in the Main Building first floor hallway, were described by Lipscomb as catalysts to convert "potential energy"--the ideas of the average student--to "kinetic energy." The suggestions received were submitted to the weekly meeting of the Grievance Committee, which would then channel them, along with recommended action, to the proper university decision-making authority--the Students' Association President, Assembly committees, the Union Board, or the Chancellor's Office (there was no University president at the time). A list of general suggestions was also placed on an "Idea List" on the bulletin board in the Association offices, to encourage Assemblymen to take personal action on them. On suggestions where a positive decision was reached, a letter was sent to the contributor if he had signed his name so that he would know that his voice had indeed been heard.<sup>21</sup> The Gripe Boxes received such a favorable response that the Association designated a week in the spring as "Gripe Week": Gripe Barrels were placed around campus, and over 400 gripes were received, many of them concerning the Undergraduate Library, student wages, and the Union Chuck Wagon restaurant. The Grievance Committee prepared an inventory of all the complaints, and invited students who signed their names to discuss their suggestions with the committee. The list was then given to Chancellor Harry Ransom, who expressed great interest in the committee's work.<sup>22</sup>

During 1964-65, President Greg Lipscomb continued to expand the Stump Speaking and Gripe Box programs. In an

additional effort to increase student-to-student government communications, Lipscomb wrote a weekly column, "The Gavel," for the Daily Texan, and encouraged student government personnel to eat at numerous student living units.<sup>23</sup> Further, to get the Assembly out to the students, where it would lose some of its mystery as the extracurricular activity of campus politicos, Lipscomb had the Assembly meet at a different dormitory, house, or other living unit for each meeting.<sup>24</sup> In aggregate, the measures taken by Glickman and Lipscomb to improve student opinion of the Association apparently enjoyed some success, if we make a purely subjective judgement based on the tone and content of the government's press and editorial coverage during that period.

#### The Student Role in University Decision-Making

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, one of the most significant questions in the student's mind in this span of time dealt with his/her role in policy- and decision-making by the faculty, administration, and regents. This was still a relatively new idea when Julius Glickman wrote in a 1964 retrospective that

Central to all that we have done is the notion that we as students have a valid voice in what happens at this university. If the student can do nothing, then he should not try. On the other hand, if he can contribute ideas and correct the problem he sees, this vision should encourage him to action.<sup>25</sup>

Two years later in a letter to Regent Rabbi Levi Olan, President John Orr put it even more succinctly: "I feel that the student today is not alienated. He simply wants to become

a part of his education, not just a result."<sup>26</sup>

When the student leaders attempted to work with the members of the faculty, they received mixed reactions. Recalls Lebermann:

Some of the older heads regarded the Association in a rather patronizing kind of way--it was something that had to be coped with and dealt with; it was just a regular problem that was a part of their duties. The newer, fresher, crisper, more forward looking, open types were more anxious to deal with us on a substantive basis and were more promotive of our ideas and our structure and our goals and the rest.<sup>27</sup>

"Patronizing" is a rather kind word to describe the less than cordial initial feelings of some of the more vocal faculty members concerning the validity and representativity of student input. For example, before the Board of Regents Committee on Academic and Development Affairs, Professor of Philosophy (and later Arts and Sciences Dean) John R. Silber stated: "What we have here is charade government, where people run through the motions of politicians." Associate Professor of Chemistry (later Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Research) Gerhard J. Fonken concurred, calling student government "the toy of amateur politicians."<sup>28</sup> Silber would frequently add, when addressing the students, "You're transients. You don't really know the problems here."<sup>29</sup>

Despite some staunch opposition such as this, the students and faculty were able to cooperate in a few areas. Most notably, the Faculty Council, on which no students sat, acted in 1963 on an Assembly proposal to add a three-day reading period before final exams to the end of Dead Week, during which classes were held but no tests given. In a compromise

decision, the Council abolished Dead Week and allowed for a two day reading period in the fall, and three days in the spring. Association President Glickman stated that the students were "extremely happy" with the equitable compromise.<sup>30</sup> Later, in 1966, the Assembly initiated a student-faculty study of implementing a pass-fail grading option.<sup>31</sup>

To improve communication between the students and faculty, the Association in 1964 began "Inquiry," a program of informal discussions between professors and students held from 8 to 10 P.M. several times a week in the Academic Center. "Inquiry" was used by students as a "drop-in" study-break during evening studies at the library, and received "favorable and very enthusiastic" support from the faculty.<sup>32</sup> A similar program, which supplemented "Inquiry" the next year, was "Food for Thought," which made arrangements for professors to eat with student groups.<sup>33</sup> And during 1965-66, the Assembly passed a bill forming the Faculty-Student Conference Committee, composed of four Assemblymen and four faculty members, to promote formal communication with the Faculty Council.<sup>34</sup>

The University administration was often even more receptive to student input in areas where previously there had been little or none. Chancellor Harry Ransom was particularly interested in meeting with students and hearing their ideas; to this end, he set up an Advisory Cabinet of representatives from various student groups, including student government. John Orr recalled that "that . . . was where we did our most productive work; and that's where the most ideas that assisted

the University in its primary goals came from."<sup>35</sup> Lebermann also remembered working very closely with Ransom, whom he "admired excessively"; this relationship was a great change from the publicly adversary roles that the students and administration had played in the two years preceding him.<sup>36</sup> He added that, in dealing with Ransom, "where our disagreements took place were in his offices . . . rather than the student newspaper and on the quadrangles. I thought it was very effective . . . ." <sup>37</sup>

The administration, in being willing to maintain an open forum for student ideas, questions, problems, and other input, should probably be credited for helping to mitigate the effects on the campus of revolution as it swept across the nation in the mid- and late-'60s. Orr, who was attending Columbia Law School during the 1968 revolt there, compared the administrative views toward student input at the two schools:

The administration [at Columbia] just did some stupid things; played right into the hands of these few radical elements. That campus is not synonymous to this one [Texas]; it's colder, not as personal. They just had the attitude that they didn't care what any of the students thought; when I was here, the attitude was, "OK, we care what you think, and we'll listen to you. We may not do what you want; but you come in and make your presentation, and we'll give it a lot of consideration."<sup>38</sup>

By working with the administration, for example, the 1965-66 Assembly gained approval of the Free Speech Area Bill, which designated the Union Patio and West Mall as areas where any recognized campus organization could operate within limits identical to those existing off-campus; distribution of literature and free speech could be exercised without prior

censorship.<sup>39</sup>

The members of the Board of Regents were similarly amenable to additional student participation and input. In May 1962, Regent Wales Madden, speaking for the entire Board, invited student delegates to meet with various Board committees during the coming year.<sup>40</sup> Lebermann, president at that time, noted that working with the regents instead of in opposition to them seemed to be the most useful approach, but qualified:

That's not to say that you couldn't well and effectively divide out and take them on when you really actively disagreed on something of substance. But you didn't do it, from my point of view (and Wales shares this), as a matter of regular strategy.<sup>41</sup>

The student government represented only one of the regents' numerous constituencies, but it was vocal and could exert strong pressure on occasion. For example, in spring 1965, the Board approved a Student Assembly proposal to abolish "approved," i.e., segregated, housing.<sup>42</sup> This effort was accomplished, again, not by noisily protesting the approved housing policy in public, but by patiently working in concert with the regents in a mature, orderly fashion. The Board was apparently pleased and impressed with the input from the Association: in February of 1966, after a regents' meeting in which the student representatives proposed that students should sit on faculty committees, Rabbi Olan, stating "The Board encourages student participation in all areas where they can be helpful and useful to the University," directed the Faculty-Student Conference Committee to suggest University



committees on which students should serve and recommended the formation of a Student Development Committee to assist the University in long-range planning.<sup>43</sup>

In general, the years 1960 to 1966 saw student government requesting greater input into policy-making, but simultaneously still trying to decide what form that input should take, and to what degree--just communication of ideas? Or ex officio membership on boards and committees? Or voting seats on decision-making bodies? A Texan editor summed up his feelings on the subject in the spring of 1966, adding some foreboding words about the years ahead:

Student government has gone "responsible." Candidates and electorate no longer care about the froth that used to consume so much sound and fury. This . . . trend toward seriousness could be for the better, but unfortunately the Student Assembly and the Students' Association still are geared to the days when somebody really cared about getting his best friend appointed to the sweetheart nominee appeals board subcommittee.

Today students are asking for a role in the governing of the University. They are willing to sit through hours of droning Regents' meetings, to plow through acres of administrative red tape, to delve into important but unspectacular aspects of University policy . . .

This plea for a voice in University affairs is a plea for the very life of student government. For if students cannot have a significant voice within the University, they will attempt to influence it from the outside through such methods as demonstration and unionization.<sup>44</sup>

### The Student Role in Integration

By the early Sixties, most near-campus restaurants and shops had opened their doors to Blacks. But the University had not moved as quickly in on-campus integration as the stu-

dents would have liked, and so the Students' Association re-directed its attention to this area. In 1961, the Assembly adopted a resolution reaffirming "the principle that all students should have equal rights and access to all University-owned facilities" by a vote of 21-1. The dissenting vote was cast by a Greek Assemblyman who had earlier proposed an amendment, which was defeated, to construe nothing in the resolution to mean that fraternities and sororities be considered as "University facilities" or that the Assembly was in favor of such equal access.<sup>45</sup> In April of that year, the Assembly advocated the gradual integration of University dorms in a resolution passed 22-2, and called for one men's dorm to be fully integrated--not partitioned--by September.<sup>46</sup> And after the Regents eliminated segregated housing in spring 1965, the Assembly undertook "tactful and mature" negotiations with owners of the remaining segregated off-campus private housing in an attempt to encourage integration.<sup>47</sup> Orr points out that in that area, "we had no power; we were just trying to persuade."<sup>48</sup>

But the Assembly did have power over some campus organizations, and in 1963 it brought that power to bear against the Athletic Council, Longhorn Band, University Choral Organizations, and the Oratorical Association: it suspended the blanket tax appropriations for these four groups, pending investigation of their integration policies.<sup>49</sup> However, the Assembly's main target--"the most obnoxious, offensive, illogical, and pointless area of segregation at the University,

intercollegiate athletics"<sup>50</sup>--was not particularly threatened, since it was the only blanket tax-supported organization that was capable of funding itself without the tax. And, not surprisingly, the Assembly recognized this fact and restored the Athletic Council's allocation eight days later.<sup>51</sup> Still, this demonstration of the effectiveness with which the Assembly could express itself received extensive press coverage, as well as editorial praise (very rare at that time) in the Texan:

. . . while the Assembly is barking with authority in this case, it is barking up the wrong tree--for this one is a giant sequoia among Blanket Tax organizations.

But the Assembly's suspension-investigation was worthwhile. It will probably not force any of the groups to integrate. But it will force them all to put forward statements of policy. And it has again brought attention to a University cyst which, if not operated soon, may burst.

If the Assembly's parting shot was well-meaning, it was also badly aimed (at least in the case of intercollegiate athletics). But it scared the opponents into the realization that the Student Assembly is capable of taking the ball and running like hell.<sup>52</sup>

#### The Student Role in Off-Campus Affairs

As it had in the 1950s, the Students' Association continued occasionally to lobby the Legislature on educational matters such as tuition increases.<sup>53</sup> But new possibilities for off-campus involvement were coming to the fore: if the question of the student role in University decision-making was the most significant one in the student's mind, then the question of his role in national and world affairs was surely the most troubling. In September 1962, for instance, the Assembly endorsed a Black's fight to enter the University of Missis-

issippi by dispatching telegrams to the prospective student and the Ole Miss student body. But the messages were approved only after extended debate concerning the role that student government should play and the areas in which it should make itself heard; some of the Assemblymen felt that the Student Assembly was acting out of its sphere.<sup>54</sup> Lowell Lebermann, who had just resigned the presidency weeks earlier, comments on the controversy:

Well, that's the students-in-their-role-as-students issue once again. The question was one of appropriateness; the issue would not even be debated today, would it? But it was then. I cannot remember the student's name at Ole Miss; he went on to become a congressman, ultimately. . . .

My problem was, should the Student Assembly, funded by students to do student kinds of things and address student issues, spend time and money and its good name and influence, if any, on more global issues, like peaceful uses of nuclear power, or congressional matters relating to things non-educational? That kind of thing troubled me at the time. It wouldn't today; I'd be pleased with that stuff.<sup>55</sup>

Another issue of continuing concern was University membership in the National Students' Association. After the UT Students' Association's affiliation with NSA in 1955, controversy had been nearly nonstop, as noted earlier. In the early 1960's, pro-NSA student leaders tried to convince the student body that the NSA was addressing problems of import to it, such as the doctrine of in loco parentis and other issues involving "students in their role as students," as required by the NSA constitution. But one proponent, then-Assemblyman Greg Lipscomb, pointed to a critical flaw in NSA membership:

There is no acting bond between the University student, his delegate, and the annual congress. Many

felt that NSA was too caught up with national and international topics, and not enough with campus issues.<sup>56</sup>

A majority of the student body apparently agreed--in a March 1963 poll, 59% of 3,631 students felt that the University should end its affiliation with NSA.<sup>57</sup> Two weeks later, the Assembly obeyed the students' mandate and voted 20-7 to withdraw immediately from NSA.<sup>58</sup>

But, true to tradition, the debate did not end there. Two years later, a campus group called the Committee for a Voice in National Student Affairs sought the return of NSA.<sup>59</sup> The Texan criticized the 1963 vote, charging that

. . . withdrawal came after a well-organized campaign by conservatives who saturated the campus with one definition, one opinion of what the National Student Association was. Instead of a constructive, objective evaluation of the organization, there was the simplified equation: It's NSA, it's left, it's bad. Solution--get out.<sup>60</sup>

The opposition retorted that (1) NSA was not national, since about half of its member schools were in four northeastern states, and only two small, private schools in Texas were members; (2) NSA was not "student," since it was more concerned with political affairs than student affairs; and (3) NSA was scarcely an association--it was "falling apart at the seams," with 102 schools having disaffiliated in the preceding four years.<sup>61</sup> However, another referendum was called on University re-affiliation on March 17, 1965, and NSA membership was again soundly defeated, this time by a 2 to 1 majority.<sup>62</sup> NSA at UT was finally dead--for the last time.

### Other Programs and Events

- The student government-sponsored Student Health Insurance Program, started in 1958, was first used extensively in 1960-61. The optional insurance was available to all students and dependents of married students and was designed to supplement the Health Center in providing care in cases of serious accident or illness. The premiums for one student ranged from \$3.00 to \$10.75 for the nine-month school year.<sup>63</sup>
- The Students' Association copyright on "The Eyes of Texas" expired on January 30, 1964, after attempts to locate the only persons who could renew the copyright, the blood relatives of author John Lang Sinclair, failed. The "Eyes" remained the official UT song, but the Association was no longer able to collect royalties on its use.<sup>64</sup>
- "Steer Here" became defunct in 1960 and then was brought back by Greg Lipscomb in summer 1964. The program added student labor requirements to its list of rating criteria. The next year, "Steer Here" was subsumed into the Grievance Committee, and by 1966 it had gradually ceased to function.<sup>65</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

As the 1965-66 school year ended, the campus was once again undergoing a visible change: the war in Vietnam was "beginning to get out of hand," and demonstrations on campus were slowly becoming more numerous--and less quiet. John Orr called it "the last peaceful year"<sup>66</sup>: students believed they had found the answers to many of their questions--and they were about to act upon their new-found confidence.

## CHAPTER 6

Notes

- p. 4. <sup>1</sup>Interview with Lowell Lebermann, February 23, 1983,
- ber 13, <sup>2</sup>The Daily Texan (hereinafter cited as "DT"), November 13, 1962.
- <sup>3</sup>Lebermann, p. 2.
- <sup>4</sup>DT, March 21, 1963.
- <sup>5</sup>DT, February 27, 1963 (editorial).
- <sup>6</sup>DT, October 17, 1962 (editorial).
- <sup>7</sup>DT, December 8 and 9, 1960.
- <sup>8</sup>DT, December 9, 1960.
- <sup>9</sup>DT, December 14, 1960.
- <sup>10</sup>Lebermann, p. 8.
- <sup>11</sup>DT, October 28, 1965.
- <sup>12</sup>DT, November 2, 1962 (editorial).
- May 17, <sup>13</sup>Panorama, a monthly supplement to The Daily Texan, 1964, p. 5.
- <sup>14</sup>DT, November 2, 1962 (editorial).
- <sup>15</sup>Interview with John Orr, April 4, 1983, pp. 1-2.
- <sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 12.
- <sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 1.
- <sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 1-2.
- <sup>19</sup>DT, October 30, 1963.
- <sup>20</sup>DT, November 6, 1963.
- <sup>21</sup>DT, November 11, 1963.
- <sup>22</sup>DT, March 13, 1964.

- <sup>23</sup>The Cactus, 1965, p. 194.
- <sup>24</sup>DT, October 8, 1964.
- <sup>25</sup>DT, April 14, 1964.
- <sup>26</sup>Records, 1965-1966, Vol. II, n. p.
- <sup>27</sup>Lebermann, p. 5.
- <sup>28</sup>DT, February 25, 1966.
- <sup>29</sup>Orr, p. 7.
- <sup>30</sup>DT, October 22 and 25, and November 19, 1963.
- <sup>31</sup>Records, 1965-1966, n. p.
- <sup>32</sup>DT, April 7, 1964, and March 30, 1965.
- <sup>33</sup>DT, April 30, 1964.
- <sup>34</sup>Records, 1965-1966, n. p.
- <sup>35</sup>Orr, p. 2.
- <sup>36</sup>Lebermann, p. 4.
- <sup>37</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>38</sup>Orr, p. 6.
- <sup>39</sup>Records, 1965-1966, n. p.
- <sup>40</sup>Records, 1962-1963, n. p.
- <sup>41</sup>Lebermann, p. 5.
- <sup>42</sup>DT, November 19, 1965.
- <sup>43</sup>DT, February 27, 1966.
- <sup>44</sup>DT, February 15, 1966 (editorial).
- <sup>45</sup>DT, February 10, 1961.
- <sup>46</sup>DT, April 28, 1961.
- <sup>47</sup>Records, 1965-1966, n. p.
- <sup>48</sup>Orr, p. 8.
- <sup>49</sup>DT, March 29, 1963.



- <sup>50</sup>DT, April 2, 1963 (editorial).  
<sup>51</sup>DT, April 5, 1963.  
<sup>52</sup>DT, April 2, 1963 (editorial).  
<sup>53</sup>DT, January 12 and February 10, 1961.  
<sup>54</sup>DT, September 28, 1962.  
<sup>55</sup>Lebermann, p. 7.  
<sup>56</sup>DT, September 25, 1962.  
<sup>57</sup>DT, March 14, 1963.  
<sup>58</sup>DT, March 29, 1963.  
<sup>59</sup>DT, February 16, 1965.  
<sup>60</sup>Ibid. (editorial).  
<sup>61</sup>DT, March 14, 1965 (editorial).  
<sup>62</sup>DT, March 18, 1965.  
<sup>63</sup>DT, September 27, 1960.  
<sup>64</sup>DT, January 29, 1964.  
<sup>65</sup>DT, August 4, 1964; and Records, 1965-1966, n. p.  
<sup>66</sup>Orr, p. 8.

## CHAPTER 7

### 1966/67-1973/74: Unrest, Upheaval and Activism

The eight-year period between fall 1966 and spring 1974 was one of major social change at the University of Texas at Austin, as on most other university campuses. Compressed into this single span of time were more changes, reorganizations, protests, disruptions and even violence than in all the rest of the University's one-hundred-year history: the formation and later dissolution of the House of Delegates, the new participation of students on all University committees, the Waller Creek protest, the Chuck Wagon incident, the march of approximately 20,000 students to downtown Austin in protest of the invasion of Cambodia and the Kent State killings, the election of an avowedly radical student president, the "hippie"-Yippie movement, the sexual revolution, the Women's movement, the enfranchisement of 18, 19, and 20-year-olds, the investigation of minority treatment on campus by the Department of HEW, the explosion in the campus population from 28,000 to 37,000 students--the list could literally extend for pages. The atmosphere on campus in which students were living and working was one of uncertainty, pressure, fear and near panic. Joe Krier, Students' Association president during the height of the upheaval, in 1969-70, recalls that

It's almost difficult to grasp how desperately emotionally, and how life-and-death, everybody viewed those issues: it really seemed like the world as we knew it was just collapsing.<sup>1</sup>

One event more than any other shaped this period: the unpopular yet escalating American involvement in Vietnam. There was a shift in the late '60s in what students felt most affected them--from concern with civil rights, academics, student participation in university governance, and other students' rights issues, to the question of "whether or not you were going to serve in a war in which you didn't particularly agree and in which it did not appear that your government was accurately representing the wishes of the populace."<sup>2</sup> Student government at Texas was able to, and did, deal effectively with the first type of issues--but it was not able to deal with the war. Students were gradually faced with a Students' Association that could no longer address those problems they felt were of greatest importance for them--war, peace, morality, and so on--and by the early '70s had begun, slowly but steadily, to lose interest in the student government process.<sup>3</sup> It would be impossible to discuss every significant detail of this period here, in the context of a fifty-year history; however, we will examine the highlights of each Association president's administration during this time span in an attempt to glean trends, developments, and major events.

#### 1966-67: Clif Drummond

The questions that students had been asking in the first half of the 1960s concerning their role in University governance had, by 1966, resolved themselves into a "students as University citizens" concept. Student body president

Clif Drummond expressed this view in the 1967 Cactus:

A university is primarily a community of teachers and students striving to seek knowledge and to reexamine values held both collectively and individually, in the light of that knowledge . . . If a student's association is to exist, and it must, then it is obligated to primarily serve ends identical to those sought by a university.

Students must recognize their unique position in the academic community. At no time can they affect the content and goals of higher education as directly as during their time in college. The Students' Association had tried to capitalize on that uniqueness.<sup>4</sup>

And in a "Gavel" column in the Texan directed at new students, Drummond charged them to carry out their duties as citizens:

In this community, as in all others, there are rules, regulations, standards, programs, and projects which all demand your support. Since you will be a citizen of this community, you will have a certain responsibility to know and understand what you can gain, and, of equal importance, what you can give. As a citizen of the University community, you have the right and opportunity to help determine what rules, regulations, projects, and programs you will be asked to support. Therefore, the Students' Association exists in order that you can understand what your rights and responsibilities are and to help you fulfill them.<sup>5</sup>

This position was indeed far different from the prevalent attitude of a decade earlier, when students at the University were more interested in gaining an education than affecting its content and goals.

The new role of students in University policy-making was reflected in many ways during 1966-67. The new House of Delegates--called for in the constitution originally started by John Orr, extensively reworked under Drummond by a joint faculty-student committee, and finally ratified by the students on April 12, 1967--drew its members from a broad base of

interest groups, other student organizations, and the colleges, and was designed to be an open, communicative forum. The Assembly was thus to be relieved of some of the endless issue-related debates, allowing it to concentrate on pursuing the students' interests with the administration and faculty policy-making committees.<sup>6, 7</sup> Also, in an effort to establish better communications and a closer working relationship with the faculty, the new constitution provided for two members of the voting faculty to serve overlapping two-year terms as Assemblymen without vote.<sup>8, 9</sup> And perhaps most importantly, the Faculty-Student Conference Committee, after twelve months of painstaking work, sent to the president of the University a comprehensive revision of all rules pertaining to student affairs. This proposal was studied further and revised by a special presidential committee during the next year. The new policies and rules, adopted by the Board of Regents in 1968 and 1969, were founded on the AAUP Statement on Academic Freedom for Students, and were stated in terms of student rights and channels for input, rather than prohibitions against certain activities.<sup>10</sup> Boundaries for acceptable behavior were thus defined in a positive way that students could easily be informed of and understand.

The 1966-67 school year marked the beginning of violence, unrest, and protest. Charles Whitman's shooting spree from the Tower on August 1, 1966 left the campus in a state of stunned shock for weeks; in December, students vehemently spoke out against the draft and the war in Vietnam, and for

"Black Power."<sup>11</sup>

1967-68: Lloyd Doggett

Under the administration of Lloyd Doggett, the Faculty Council--acting on recommendations of the Faculty-Student Conference Committee--moved the concept of student participation in governance of the University one step closer to its logical conclusion: in June 1967, the Council reorganized University policy-making committees, removing all administrative and staff personnel as voting members, and increased student representation.<sup>12</sup> By the end of 1968, students had been added to five major faculty committees, resulting in even student-faculty representation on one, but maintaining faculty majorities on the other four.<sup>13</sup> The students also managed to achieve an effective student majority on the Union Board, two years after the Board of Regents added two faculty members, to change the Board's composition to a 6-5 faculty majority. The five students persuaded two of the sympathetic faculty members to vote with them to create an Executive Committee of the Union Board consisting of all five students plus one faculty member and having the powers to act for the full Board, with the provision that the committee's decisions could be overridden only by a three-fourths vote of the entire Board.<sup>14</sup> This action naturally attracted the attention of the Board of Regents, which approved the move with the additional caveat that all Union Board actions be subject to the approval of University President Norman Hackerman and the regents.<sup>15</sup> This revision was unacceptable to the

Students' Association; Doggett recalled, in his final address:

In this instance we used the "revered channels" and the Administration's rules to yield effective student participation. This unexpected channel utilization was unhospitably termed a "sneaky legal trick"--as if the Administration had never used any sneaky tricks as it shuffled us from one committee to another. Only after the Assembly and the House of Delegates overwhelmingly endorsed a negotiating team which threatened to boycott the Union was a compromise eventually achieved.<sup>16</sup>

The Union Board controversy was just one example of the beginning of the gradual deterioration in student government--administration communication. Then-President Doggett pointed out that

Throughout our efforts we have found that letters, reports, and resolutions to the Administration have generally been unheeded, because the Administration does not understand the student or his needs. Inevitably we have found the Administration has more time, tricks and committees than we have resolutions.

In this situation we had to change from traditional noncontroversial "communications" to methods that would produce a better University.<sup>17</sup>

These "methods" included investigating complaints of off-campus housing discrimination when the administration preferred simply to publicize them, and other similar situations where the Doggett Administration would act on a student services issue rather than interminably waiting for the University administration to do so. A few years later, frequent, direct lobbying of the Legislature, bypassing all lower decision-making levels, would be added as a method of producing change.

As for other projects, the strongly student services-

oriented 1967-68 Students' Association conducted a study of library facilities, created the University Housing Committee to remedy complaints in on- and off-campus living accommodations, extended international student and faculty exchange programs, and activated the Undergraduate Research Program, which provided 22 grants for a wide variety of independent interdisciplinary research projects.<sup>18</sup> But Doggett's government also entered areas that were only remotely student related: for example, it established the Student Academic Freedom and Responsibility Committee, which actively questioned, "in a constructive and institutionalized manner, the wisdom of administrators and budget councils in their faculty employment practices."<sup>19</sup> Such actions undoubtedly did little to promote good relations with the administration; worse, they made the road even more difficult for future Students' Associations.

The House of Delegates got off to a bad start in its first year, due to its perceived lack of other than recommendatory power. Doggett blamed the problem on lack of effective leadership; but the House also suffered from frequent disruptions, as when one delegate marched out of the second meeting singing the Mickey Mouse theme. Walkouts became more frequent; the body was dubbed the "Mickey Mouse House," and the name stuck.<sup>20</sup>

Spurred on by the cartoon rodent's campus popularity, a newly-organized campus group calling itself the Aroused Political Association To Help You (A.P.A.T.H.Y.) decided



to run Mickey for Students' Association president in spring 1968. A.P.A.T.H.Y. members felt that students were apathetic--only 27% voted in the previous spring's election--because they could not identify with the issues being dealt with by student government. Mickey Mouse instead advocated projects of common interest, such as an exchange program with LaGrange and the holding of Student Assembly meetings in a basement broom closet.<sup>21</sup> But A.P.A.T.H.Y. made it clear, in a campaign leaflet entitled "In Defense of A.P.A.T.H.Y.," that

Mickey Mouse is not a prank; he is a very serious joke. If you feel you are not represented in the Union [i.e., the student government offices], if you feel there are some issues that affect you, if you feel there are no real candidates--in short, if you feel that as an average student, you are politically dead--your vote will be a serious barometer of your dissillusionment [sic] and dis-appointment in student government.

WRITE-IN MICKEY MOUSE.

Many students did so, and Mickey Mouse became the first non-human candidate for president in the history of the UT Students' Association to garner more votes than some of his human competitors.

#### 1968-69: Rostam Kavoussi

In hindsight, 24-year-old Iranian mechanical engineering graduate student Rostam Mehraban Kavoussi was probably among the best presidents that the UT Students' Association has ever had. When Kavoussi's administration was really beginning to get underway, the campus still saw the Assembly and the House as bodies of "Mickey Mouse government": the Assembly was not effectively and constructively addressing the issues that

students felt were pertinent, and the House could rarely succeed in even getting a quorum--one-third of its membership--in order to transact business. Once again, as in the early Sixties, there was talk of abolition:

Student government. The term is generally thought to be a meaningless one on any campus. It might possibly be applied here.

Unless the Student Assembly plans to do anything but pass bills all year long, as it seems to be doing currently, it probably ought to be abolished.

To illustrate the responsiveness to the world around; the Assembly will have a bill presented that will establish a draft counseling service of the Students' Association. Of course, there is some question as to whether it will pass. But even though it is a fine idea, it's a little late.

On other issues around the campus, the Assembly may be responsive a little more quickly. But the Assembly apparently knows no other way to respond except through passage of bills which have no meaning or effect.

The Assembly needs to re-evaluate its position and purpose in the University . . . It must either halt its rubber stamp approval of actions taken by other groups on any issue, the Union or fair housing, and initiate action, or it should be abolished unless some re-evaluation of purpose and need can be delivered other than self-aggrandizement of campus politicians.<sup>22</sup>

During 1968-69, the Assembly members continued to be apathetic and unresponsive. Yet a great deal was accomplished, through the leadership of "Tom" Kavoussi. He had to push the Assembly as well as lead the students: the vast majority of the year's bills were written by him, passed at his insistence, and executed through his persistence. With only a few individuals excepted, the assemblymen were reluctant to support the bills for which they voted; thus, few were implemented unless Kavoussi himself had time to push them.<sup>23</sup>

But Rostam Kavoussi was one of the rare presidents

of the student body at Texas who was able to remain, in his words, "a free and independent individual despite all the direct and indirect pressures."<sup>24</sup> He had no political aspirations; the presidency was not a stepping-stone to higher office as it had been for so many of his predecessors. His primary goal was to chart a long-range course for the student government:

It is not enough to react to something unfavorable after it has happened. We must make sure it doesn't happen again, and the only way is to include students in the decision making.<sup>25</sup>

At the end of his term, Kavoussi resignedly admitted that he had been only "fairly successful" in achieving his goal,<sup>26</sup> and perhaps he was accurate in that he was not able to see many of his projects to fruition during his term. However, Rostam Kavoussi laid the groundwork for many critical programs that would benefit the student body for years. In the area of student input, he proposed a new "Faculty Senate," to replace the Faculty Council, that would have been composed of 13 students, 13 faculty and 13 administrators; the Faculty Council in the spring rejected this plan, but substituted a compromise plan which created today's University Council--three students plus the old Faculty Council--to give students a voice in academic decision- and policy-making.<sup>27</sup> In addition, Kavoussi pushed for and received faculty and regental approval for a measure to allow a committee of three students and nine faculty to select nominees for the University presidency and other top administrative posts; previously, students had had no say in such appointments.<sup>28</sup> Also,

Kavoussi helped the faculty and administration to carry out the assurances that they had made the previous year for student input on policy-making committees: by the end of 1968, almost 130 students had been seated, with at least two on every important committee.<sup>29</sup> And Kavoussi made his own voice heard: "treading on posted territory," he aroused a harsh reaction against himself and the Assembly when he vocally opposed the appointment of Frank C. Erwin, Jr. as chairman of the Board of Regents.<sup>30</sup>

In the area of direct student services, Kavoussi was largely responsible for two major accomplishments. First, he prodded the Assembly into establishing in March the Office of the Students' Attorney (first proposed by Lloyd Doggett), a full-time lawyer who would act as counsel to the Students' Association with regard to state and federal legislation pertaining to students, advise the Association's Attorney General, and establish a legal referral service program for individual students.<sup>31</sup> By the end of the school year, a search was underway for someone to fill the new position. Second, as a result of research done by the Assembly Parking Committee, Kavoussi encouraged passage of the shuttle bus proposal--probably the single best-known achievement of student government at Texas--and recommended the program to President Hackerman, along with a request for a \$2.00 increase in the student services fee to cover the operating costs of the system.<sup>32</sup>

The administration was impressed with Kavoussi and

the handful of students who helped him. Dr. Hackerman credited the Association with bringing up many thought-provoking and irritating questions during the year; Vice-President for Student Affairs Bryce Jordan conceded that although the 1968-69 student government had been one of the most pointed toward the administration, it had also been one of the most effective: "There is little question that student government is a greater force now than it has been in previous years."<sup>33</sup> The Texan, which had been so critical of the Association at the beginning of the year, had even more abundant praise in an editorial titled "Tom Kavoussi, 'Our Thanks'":

Students at this University owe a great debt to Rostam Kavoussi for all the advancements he has achieved for greater student participation in University affairs and for progressive liberal reform for student involvement within the administrative structure.

Rostam Kavoussi has been the paragon of what a student body president should be. He actually has represented students on all issues relevant to them, and he has acted freely and independently with the dignity and inquiry of an honest concerned human being.

Rostam Kavoussi, it is sincere thanks and appreciation that we students who believe in reform of this institution give to you. We hope all of your fine work will not be nullified in the future.

To Rostam, as Carl Schurz said, your "Ideals (for the University) are like the stars; you will not succeed in touching them with your hand. But like the seafaring man on the desert of waters, you have chosen them as your guides, and following them, you will reach your destiny."<sup>34</sup>

It is indeed sad that the students themselves were so apathetic, unappreciative, or unaware of their Association president's efforts. As one coed put it, her concerns were "classes, Kant, men, food, booze, clothes, and money--just like everyone else." Student government? "It doesn't exist

for me," she said.<sup>35</sup> Kavoussi likewise noted in his farewell address: "My most important discovery was that most of the students do not give a damn. . . ."<sup>36</sup> One can only imagine how powerful and effective the 1968-69 student government would have been if its "Me generation" representatives and constituents had cared.

1969-70: Joe Krier

The 1969-70 school year was one of almost continuous campus unrest; Students' Association President Joe Krier recalled 13 years later that "it seemed like we just went from crisis to crisis; you didn't get one out of the way--it just flowed into the next big one."<sup>37</sup> On October 22, 1969, students climbed into the trees along Waller Creek to prevent bulldozers and chainsaws from clearing the way for the re-routing of San Jacinto Boulevard during the construction of Bellmont Hall. Police arrested and detained 27 of the protesters, while Regents' Chairman Erwin stood below, shouting "I want the trees down. . . . Arrest all the people you have to."<sup>38</sup> Later in the day, an angry mob of 500 returned to the site, and dragged the huge, uprooted trees to the Main Building, where they were stuffed under and around the front entrance archways. President Hackerman ordered the doors barricaded and manned by UT police; after two hours of closed-door negotiations with a six-member negotiating committee headed by Krier, Hackerman agreed to try to set up a meeting between the committee and Erwin. Krier commented:

. . . the problem that Frank Erwin and the

University has always had is being willing to say "That was a horrible mistake; let's get out of this." The tendency of the institution has always been, once a mistake has been made, to just go ahead and carry it out, and damn the consequences. Waller Creek was an example of that: taking the decision as it was, it did not have to be put into effect with the kind of brute force that was utilized, which gave the University a black eye all over the state; my God, we got national publicity out of it.<sup>39</sup>

The Student Assembly subsequently passed a resolution "expressing disappointment" in Erwin's actions.<sup>40</sup>

Less than a month later, the Union Board voted to limit use of the Chuck Wagon restaurant in the Union to students and faculty; in response to student complaints that "street people," runaways, and other non-students were living there and using the Chuck Wagon as a location for "dope dealing" and similar illegal activities; the students, who supported the Chuck Wagon with their Union fees, had been driven out. Steve Van, chairman of the Union Board and Joe Krier were called in to help enforce the new regulation, and Krier remembers the riot that ensued:

[E]verybody kind of knew ahead of time that the street community was not going to voluntarily leave, and ultimately it took bringing in police force to get them out. Like a lot of things at that time, police tend to take matters into their own hands, which they did; and the next thing you knew, you had a major riot on your hands. And I and the members of the Union Board were involved from the very beginning to the very end of that thing in doing what we could, initially, to persuade everybody to leave voluntarily and to warn them that the police were coming in, and then once the police came in, trying to get as many people out as we could before they started making arrests; once the tear gas started slinging, well, we all beat a hasty retreat to a more breatheable area.

It was an incredible experience.<sup>41</sup>

On Friday, May 8, approximately 20,000 students and

faculty members jammed the streets of Austin, protesting the May 4 Kent State killings. The march climaxed a week of violent demonstrations against the U.S. involvement in Cambodia, the trial of Black Panther Bobby Seale, the arrest of 10 anti-ROTC demonstrators, and the four Ohio deaths. Krier served his last day in office, along with many members of the Student Assembly and the House of Delegates, as a parade marshal to keep the march peaceful. They succeeded.<sup>42</sup>

Within this type of campus atmosphere, it is truly amazing that the Students' Association managed to accomplish anything at all during 1969-70; but student government was quite active nonetheless. The Assembly hired the first Students' Attorney, Jim Boyle, after persuading Frank Erwin not to veto the post;<sup>43</sup> it also started the shuttle bus system, which was used by 13,000 students daily, as proposed by Rostam Kavoussi's administration.<sup>44</sup> Krier continued to promote active student participation on University committees, including adding three voting student members to the powerful Building Committee.<sup>45</sup> When President Hackerman resigned, Joe Krier was one of three students designated by the Assembly to serve on the nominating committee to fill his vacancy.<sup>46</sup> Krier also attended all meetings of the Board of Regents, and Erwin allowed him to speak freely to the student interest.<sup>47</sup>

Yet despite all of this activity, student government was not able to deal with the broad social issues--primarily, those related to the Vietnam War--that were of utmost concern



to the students. Most students remained apathetic towards the campus student government; those who were not had little but criticism for the apparent lack of leadership displayed by the assemblymen, the constant failures of the House to achieve a quorum, and the power squabbles between the two bodies.<sup>48</sup> In December, the Texan started a "Kill Mickey Mouse" petition drive to eliminate the House and return to a unicameral system,<sup>49</sup> and in the spring, plans were made for a referendum on the proposal.<sup>50</sup> More severely, there was discussion of totally abolishing the Students' Association: an editor wrote in March 1970 that "students would be much better off without this student government,"<sup>51</sup> and Joe Krier recalls that "we were always scared to death that there was going to be a referendum on whether or not to abolish it."<sup>52</sup>

But, for all the charges of uselessness of and disrespect for student government, the Krier Administration had what is probably the single most outstanding accomplishment in the entire history of the UT Students' Association:

If you want to say what is the most significant thing that students brought about in 1969-70--number one, there was no loss of life on our campus, in one of the most tumultuous periods of time in American history, . . . [b]ecause of efforts by the people in student government. I've got to give student government some credit for that, because a whole lot of those other parade marshals were Student Assemblymen, and a whole lot of those people who tried to keep the Chuck Wagon uproar from winding up with people being killed--which it well could have, and the Waller Creek incident from winding up with people being killed, which it well could have--and I don't mean by people being shot, although in some instances that was the case, but by their being trampled to death or crushed by bulldozers, or from riots breaking out during the Kent State march. That was not the case on other

campuses across the country.

I mean, we came through that year intact. That's an accomplishment of some magnitude that I played a small part in, and perhaps a small leadership part in; but I'm relieved of that more than anything else. It would have been very easy to look back and say, "My God, that was the year that ten students were killed at the University of Texas. . . ." <sup>53</sup>

A sobering thought indeed.

### 1970-71: Jeff Jones

Responding to the "mood of disenchantment and the inability of student government to relate to the campus," <sup>54</sup> the student body elected on April 1, 1970 the University's first politically radical Students' Association president, Jeff Jones. Jones, a teaching assistant in English, had graduated from the University with honors in Spanish in 1965, and was working on a doctorate in comparative literature; he was a member of the activist Student Mobilization Committee and a writer for The Rag, the campus' underground newspaper. Jones won the office, in a runoff that drew an unheard-of 10,121 students to the polls, <sup>55</sup> by putting together a strong backing of left-wing groups collectively calling themselves The Yin-Yang Coalition Conspiracy (not "Conspiracy Coalition," as it is usually misprinted--the word "conspiracy" was added at the last minute, purely for a sensationally activist sound).

The bearded, beaded, long-haired Jones termed his victory "far out," and attributed it to the important social issues he had raised that the other six candidates had not researched and "were not up to": racism, imperialism, ecology, abolishing the grading system and the foreign language

requirements, male chauvinism—women's liberation, and providing birth control and abortion information to students.<sup>56</sup> The student body had not suddenly become radical. Rather, it was frustrated with the traditional approaches to student government that simply were unable to address actively these pressing issues that Jones had identified with some accuracy. As one student put it, "While Jones didn't offer any concrete proposals, he did give people the feeling that he would be active."<sup>57</sup>

Reaction to Jones' election from the administration was guarded, at best. President Norman Hackerman predicted nothing at the beginning of Jones' term; he said only that the year was "bound to be different" and that he would like to "meet Jones and talk to him before I say much."<sup>58</sup> But others were not as discreet in their comments: a professor who had spent over 20 years at the University said, "This is the best evidence I've seen yet against lowering the voting age to 18." And a widely known alumnus added, "Frank Erwin's chickens have come home to roost."<sup>59</sup>

The faculty, alumni, legislators and administrators' worst fears never materialized, however. There were "no takeovers of buildings, violent demonstrations, mass sexual and drug orgies, or other 'radical' evils" sponsored by the Students' Association during Jeff Jones' term; the Association operated entirely within the framework of the law.<sup>60</sup> Then again, the student body's visions of great strides of progressive reform were also left unfulfilled: the Jones

administration, for all its promised of action, in the end accomplished very little of substance. Early in the fall, Jones organized a 17-question referendum--dubbed by the Texan "Jeff's Magic Elixir (or) How we learned to stop worrying and cured all the world's ills in only 17 issues!"--dealing with everything from student government, Frank Erwin's performance as regents' chairman, and the University's minority recruitment policy to U.S. military intervention in the Middle East and U.S. policy for Indochina.<sup>61</sup>

13,993 students voted in the referendum<sup>62</sup>--a record turnout that still stands to this day--but few of the issues were ever acted upon. Both houses of the student legislature were often unable to achieve a quorum, and the Assembly was plagued by early walkouts of members which several times prevented it from considering important legislation.<sup>63</sup> Jones gave virtually no leadership to the student government; he preferred to "do his own thing" by speaking out on the Middle East crisis, local labor strikes, and so on, rather than being "concerned with burning campus matters such as who gets his picture in the yearbook."<sup>64</sup> His focus prompted sharp criticism from many students, including Joe Krier and Kenneth Sparks, whom Jones had defeated in the runoff election. Signing their "Firing Line" letter to the editor as "The Krier-Sparks-Tejas Club politico machine," as Jones had once referred to them, Sparks and Krier wrote:

We encourage Mr. Jones to continue his valiant and productive efforts to fight imperialism in the Mideast and rampant capitalism in Austin. These issues are obviously of utmost importance to the

UT student body. We know they will result in an improvement and resolution of the problems confronting students and faculty on this campus.<sup>65</sup>

The Constitutional Revision Committee, established by the House of Delegates to consider restructuring the Students' Association as recommended by the April 1970 referendum, was characterized by a "circular chain of inaction": it voted in the spring of 1970 to investigate the idea that the Association would form a corporation and move off campus, only to discard that idea at its next meeting; over the next six months, it considered running student government through campuswide referenda or mass meetings and electing representatives according to their zodiac sign, eventually returning to reconsideration of the corporate structure.<sup>66</sup> Finally, the committee submitted to the Assembly a new constitution which abolished the House of Delegates, changed the Student Assembly to a Student Senate with all members proportionally elected from the schools and colleges, added the salaried administrative position of financial director, and changed the name of the student body at the University from the Students' Association to the Student Government.<sup>67</sup> The new constitution was approved by the student body during the spring general election.

Jeff Jones did leave his mark on the Student Government, as would become obvious the following year. The election of the Yin-Yang Coalition Conspiracy radicals, the inactivity of the governing bodies, and the resultant apathy and anger of the student body sent a message to the conservative Board of

Regents that was all too clear: "the student government is no longer accurately representing the students." Until the abolition in 1978, the Board would base its actions related to student government on this premise. Although student interest would again increase briefly a few years later, the 1970-71 term of Jeffery J. Jones was the beginning of what became an inevitable end.

1971-72: Bob Binder

Bob Binder commented that Jeff Jones "presented an image that the regents just couldn't stand. And I mean, not just disagreeing with him: they despised Jeff Jones as a student body president."<sup>68</sup> Thus, in 1971-72, the Board of Regents began to take steps to change the power structure of the Student Government to avoid potential trouble if another radical rose to prominence in the increasingly canny and resourceful body. One of these steps was gradually to de-fund Student Government: at its June 4, 1971 meeting, the board cut Student Government's share of the blanket tax (which they again renamed the Student Activities Fee) from the \$2.75 it had requested to \$1.65, specifying that those funds were to be used only for office expenses, the Election Commission, and the Students' Attorney's Office. Student Government was prohibited from using Activities Fee monies for any other programs without reconsideration by the regents on an item-by-item basis. The Board also authorized Student Government to collect an optional fee, independent of the SAF,<sup>69</sup> but as Binder notes, that was an unrealistic way to fund the or-

ganization: "No government, not any government anywhere, any time, any place, relies on voluntary contributions to sustain itself."<sup>70</sup>

Jenkins Garrett, 1935-36 student body president, was a member of the Board of Regents at the time, and maintains that there was nothing done intentionally to weaken student government; the actions that were taken were "what was interpreted by us to be the great, great majority view of the student body. . . . The Student Government had programs on abortion, they had activities instructing people with respect to their position on the draft, and those kinds of things that had to do with politics and political viewpoints, and nothing to do with the campus; and the majority of the students were not in tune with it."<sup>71</sup> To Garrett's contention, Binder countered:

He is being other than candid with you; he's saying two different things--he's saying, "No we didn't, but here's why we did--because the students didn't like it." And of course they did; it's simply not true to say that they didn't try to reduce the funding or the power of student government . . .

The idea that the elected leaders spend on some popular things that some students don't like--well, goodness gracious, I'm not one bit fond of hardly anything that Ronald Reagan says; but I have to pay my taxes . . . That's the nature of the beast, and for them to say, "Well, there were some students that didn't like what Bob Binder or Jeff Jones said . . . "--the solution in a democracy is to vote somebody else in, and all the students could vote. But in reality, they did not like student government the way it had evolved; they didn't like its independence; they didn't like the monster they'd created, was the way they saw it."<sup>72</sup>

Another move to reduce the power of the Student Government was the regents' sudden provision of a \$0.25 cut

from the SAF to fund Senior Cabinet.<sup>73</sup> This organization, which had quietly existed since the early Fifties, was composed of representatives from each of the college councils--appointed by the Deans of the various schools and colleges. This was apparently an attempt to shift power and the representation function from Student Government to a group of students perceived by the Board as "safe": after all, as Binder pointed out, "the deans wouldn't dare appoint somebody that would antagonize the administration, at least not somebody like a Jeff Jones."<sup>74</sup> In addition, by directly allocating money to Senior Cabinet, the regents effectively rescinded the traditional Student Government control over all optional student monies.

Bob Binder maintains today that Student Government was popular--because of the controversial but urgently needed services it provided--but that the regents were listening to only a vocal handful of dissatisfied students who were "sons of prominent friends of theirs."<sup>75</sup> He also hints that, while talking and drinking in private with Frank Erwin, the chairman of the Board of Regents confirmed that it was his intention ultimately to destroy the Student Government:

He got drunk just like every other person on the face of the Earth, and it was at those times that I, more often than not, found out many of the truths that were about to be done to me. That's why I can sit here--I'm not going to quote Frank Erwin; I'm going to honor his statements even in death--but I can tell you, without any fear whatever, that yes, it was their intent to un-fund us; yes, it was their intent to move it to a college council. And to say that the regents were not trying to decrease our control or un-fund us is not true.



DSG: He told you that?

BINDER: I'm not going to quote him.

DSG: Not quoting, but . . .

BINDER: I know that. That is not conjecture on my part.<sup>76</sup>

Binder believed (and still does) in gaining power by acting, rather than waiting for regental or administrative approval:

Jeff Jones was singularly ineffective because he cursed at the darkness; I've always been very result-oriented. I wanted to try to do what would work, what would get us a good result; I didn't want to just sit back and yell "abortions ought to be legal"; I wanted to say, "OK, how are we going to help these women that need help--not talk anybody into having an abortion. . . ." <sup>77</sup>

The immediate result of this philosophy was a highly effective Binder Administration. It provided birth control information and the abortion loan and counseling service for the approximately 500 women on campus with an unwanted pregnancy, so as to help avoid illicit "back-alley" abortions and the related deaths.<sup>78</sup> It expanded the draft counseling service, which was praised by the Selective Service System.<sup>79</sup> It worked for—and achieved partial—compliance with federal wage-price freeze measures at the University.<sup>80</sup> While it sponsored and sanctioned demonstrations and believed in student activism based on legal research and action, it played a decisive role in avoiding violence.<sup>81</sup> And in what Binder termed the biggest single accomplishment of his term, the Student Government kept the regents from changing the Daily Texan editorship from an elected position to an ap-

pointed one: only after Binder, as chairman of the board of Texas Student Publications, Inc., threatened to remove the \$600,000 worth of printing presses and print the Texan off-campus did the regents back down.<sup>82</sup>

The year was one of great activity, both in student services and deinstitutionalization on campus. But as Student Government President Binder left his mark on the campus, so did the events of the year leave their mark on him:

The bitterness remains to this day, that I had to spend half my time to keep student government and the Daily Texan from being destroyed by the regents, the people who ostensibly are training the leaders of timorrow.<sup>83</sup>

#### 1972-73: Dick Benson

Dick Benson took office in spring 1972 amidst a wave of relatively high interest in Student Government; the almost continuous controversy with the regents during the preceding year had focused the attention of the student body on its embattled government and had united many student factions against their common foe: Frank Erwin. In addition, Student Government was finally functioning to some extent as the voice in off-campus affairs that the students had desired for so long. But this seemingly salutary trend worried Benson, who felt that the students and the public were more interested in the superficial news provided by Student Government than in its programs.<sup>84</sup>

Thus, Benson's emphasis as student body president was "providing substantive, real things" that would continue to serve the students long after the heated issues of the

moment had lost their fury.<sup>85</sup> His most significant accomplishment was the initiation in October 1972 of the Texas Student Lobby (TSL), a body that quickly became skilled at representing the interests of students across the state in the Texas Legislature. The TSL was formed in affiliation with other colleges who were members of the Texas Intercollegiate Student Association, and was based on a similar concept effectively operating in California.<sup>86</sup> Still surviving today, the TSL in 1972-73 commanded respect: it spoke for a direct membership of about 300,000 students,<sup>87</sup> and was well funded by membership fees of several hundred dollars per school and money solicited from private individuals who had shown interest in students.<sup>88</sup> And, in striking contrast to the inefficacy of ad hoc lobbying efforts in earlier decades, legislators suddenly listened carefully to the TSL--the 18-year-olds had been enfranchised in 1971, and votes talk. To similar ends, Benson also formed the City Council Lobby Committee to make the student voice heard before the Council as well as in the planning and service departments of the city.<sup>89</sup> This program, however, lacked the organization and backing of the TSL, and did not survive the abolition of student government in 1978.

The Benson Administration enjoyed some influence with the Board of Regents as well: it succeeded in pushing through the first budget increase for student government in three years, from \$53,000 to \$72,000, including \$40,000 for the Office of the Students' Attorney, which flourished under

Benson.<sup>90</sup> Additionally, the Student Government independently raised about \$20,000 in funds (from the Student Government Films and Student Health Insurance programs), the use of which was not subject to regental approval.<sup>91</sup> But, like his predecessor, Dick Benson was forced to spend an inordinately large portion of his time defending Student Government against what he called the Board's "divide and conquer strategy."<sup>92</sup> The Board began to delegate more power and responsibility to the Senior Cabinet, in effect forcing the Cabinet and Student Government into an adversary, competitive relationship; for example, Senior Cabinet was allowed to allocate a portion of the student funds (totalling \$7,000) formerly a function of Student Government. In October, the Cabinet requested and obtained two seats on the University Council, claiming that it was more representative of the campus academically than Student Government because of its "grass roots" organization and support. Another indication that the Senior Cabinet had gained in stature was that its members became eligible for "A" parking permits--a privilege never extended to the student senators.<sup>93, 94</sup>

Dick Benson was an imaginative, creative, active president. But these traits may have proved to be as much hindrances as they were helpful; as the Texan editor noted, "If there is one criticism to be leveled at Benson, it's that he may have divided his attention among too many programs to concentrate enough energy on any one."<sup>95</sup> And even though Benson established the enduring, powerful Texas Student

Lobby and raised the largest amount ever in unencumbered funds, those were relatively low-profile projects without immediately visible results; he observed upon leaving office: "But that's not what the immediate constituency wants. They want a lot more public realtions and political posturing rather than real things."<sup>96</sup> Unfortunately, he was correct in his analysis--voter interest in the government dipped slightly during his term, and the students again looked for a change.

1973-74: Sandy Kress

That change came in the form of the liberal University Reform Coalition (URC) headed by Sandy Kress. The party system had more or less died out amidst the unrest and upheaval of the late 1960s, and elections had come to be more of an individual exercise; when a "party" did form, it was usually a one-time effort to oppose a specific group or issue--it was fashionable at the time to be "anti—" something, just because it was the status quo. But in spring 1973, Kress, a 22-year-old law student and former student body vice-president at UC Berkely, had the idea to run a group of similarly liberal-minded candidates with him under the URC banner, so that students who were only aware of his campaign might go ahead and vote for the whole slate.<sup>97</sup>

The students did as Kress anticipated, and the result was an extraordinarily powerful Student Government characterized by an unusually high degree of cooperation between the president and the Senate. One of Kress' main goals as

president was to reshape the Student Government so that it could do more than just take sides on vital issues: he sought to broaden student participation in the process to allow Student Government "to work on projects in a systematic way that would benefit the students."<sup>98</sup> The result was the Senate Reorganization Act, which created 12 standing committees, each devoted to a specific functional area of student life or student concern--Education, University Policies, Minority Affairs, Communications, Housing, State Lobby, Consumer and Environmental Affairs, Political Resolutions, Finance, City Lobby, Women's Affairs, and Expansion and Utilization.<sup>99</sup> A student senator headed each committee, but the members were actively recruited from outside the Student Senate. This participatory structure made it possible for members of the University community to use the resources of Student Government to implement their own ideas that would benefit the student body.<sup>100</sup>

The utility of the new committee structure surpassed even Kress' expectations. In the area of student services, Student Government opened a foreign study referral center and a women's referral center, both in the Student Government offices. With the initiative of Senator Carol Crabtree, the Student Government Tours program, which provided group discount touring packages was begun. Student Government helped to coordinate plans for the University day care center, which opened in September 1974.<sup>101</sup> Additionally, Student Government Films, started in 1973 by Dick Benson, and the

Student Government—sponsored Student Health Insurance both thrived under the guidance of the new committee system; these two ongoing projects were also lucrative sources of student-controlled funding.<sup>102</sup>

Student Government was even more active and effective in dealing with issues that concerned the student as a citizen of the off-campus community. It made the student voice heard in the City Council and the Texas Legislature; it also helped to elect pro-student councilmen and representatives. Student lobbying received a great deal of credit for passage of bills increasing faculty pay and reducing the penalty for possession of marijuana from a felony to a misdemeanor classification. Student Government was also vocal on the national level, lobbying to end the war in Cambodia, and pushing for creation of the Big Thicket National Park.<sup>103</sup> And in what was probably his most famous achievement as president, Kress went directly to the federal government for help in dealing with charges of minority discrimination on campus, calling in the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to conduct a thorough investigation.<sup>104</sup>

While Student Government enjoyed considerable success in providing student services and lobbying for off-campus affairs, it was far less effective in the area of influencing University policy.<sup>105</sup> Sandy Kress attributes this fact to the constant competition with Senior Cabinet for input into academic policy-making; the administration still was convinced that the appointed members of the Cabinet provided a more

representative student voice than did the elected senators and officers of Student Government.<sup>106</sup> Another factor inhibiting student influence was a degree of increased resistance from the Board of Regents: Chairman Frank Erwin would sometimes pretend to sleep through the impassioned pleas of students speaking before the Board as means of intimidating the speaker, particularly, Kress believes, when he realized that a good point was being made, and some of the regents would on occasion use technicalities in the Board's rules to avoid student protest over a decision.<sup>107</sup>

But in some ways, the powerful Erwin was a help to Student Government as well as a handicap, as Kress insightfully observed:

Let me say this about Erwin . . . maybe it's easier because the man's gone, and I'm older, and I'm gone too, in a way; I'm gone from the campus at least--I have tremendous respect for Erwin. I wish there was still an Erwin around. . . . [H]e was a bad guy in a lot of ways. But let me tell you this: we weren't electing Hank the Hallucination while he was there. Erwin helped create an image for student government in my view that was positive. Students always understood that there was an issue; Erwin made the University an exciting place. He fought hard for his interests, which in many cases were not the interests of the students, I didn't think (and I still don't). I think he was wrong in a lot of respects, but there was no question that he was passionate and cared deeply about the University and fought for the University; and in that passion, and in that emotion, he created a lot of issues--a lot of issues would fly out from his activity that, I think, led to a very substantial debate in the University about what ought to be done to improve the University, with respect to students, and so forth. I get the impression that a lot of those things just aren't discussed now at all; and, I'll tell you, I'd prefer that environment to the current environment. And in that environment, student government was easier because of the heat of all that activity. It



was easier for students, I think, to perceive that they had an interest in the University, and as a result of that interest, that they should be taking stands and be involved in all that--which I think is a whole lot better, frankly, than maybe the kind of attitude that exists these days. So in that sense, I think Erwin was good.<sup>108</sup>

By the end of the 1973-74 school year, two events--one perceptible, one less so--had occurred that spelled increased future trials and tribulations for Student Government. On March 15, 1974, the Board of Regents unexpectedly ended the guaranteed funding for Student Government and the Daily Texan from the Student Services Fee (which had become mandatory after Athletics and CEC were made separate, optional fees) and provided for these two organizations to raise funds by optional check-off. Furious students held a rally on the Main Mall which culminated in a march on the Capitol, "attracting several thousand students and bringing back a ghost of the spirit many people thought had passed with the '60s."<sup>109</sup> That commentary, from the 1974 Cactus features section, reflected the second major, though less obvious, change: after eight long, turbulent years, the atmosphere of unrest, upheaval, and activism on campus had quietly subsided, giving way to new concerns and new attitudes toward student government.

## CHAPTER 7

Notes

- <sup>1</sup>Interview with Joe Krier, February 18, 1983, p. 11.
- <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 15.
- <sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 14-15.
- <sup>4</sup>The Cactus, 1967, p. 188.
- <sup>5</sup>The Daily Texan, (hereinafter cited as "DT"), August 19, 1966.
- <sup>6</sup>The Cactus, 1967, p. 188.
- <sup>7</sup>Krier, p. 1.
- <sup>8</sup>DT, February 24, 1967.
- <sup>9</sup>Proposed constitution of the Students' Association, as printed in The Daily Texan, March 22, 1967.
- <sup>10</sup>The Cactus, 1967, p. 188.
- <sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 73-83.
- <sup>12</sup>The Summer Texan, June 16, 1967 (editorial).
- <sup>13</sup>Final Report of the President, p. 5, in Records, 1967-1968, vol. I, n.p.
- <sup>14</sup>Krier, p. 7.
- <sup>15</sup>Final Report of the President, p. 5.
- <sup>16</sup>Address by Lloyd Doggett, May 8, 1968, p. 2, in Records, 1967-1968, vol. I, n.p.
- <sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 1.
- <sup>18</sup>Final Report of the President, pp. 1-3.
- <sup>19</sup>Address by Lloyd Doggett, p. 2.
- <sup>20</sup>DT, January 10, 1968.
- <sup>21</sup>DT, March 17, 1968.
- <sup>22</sup>DT, October 3, 1968 (editorial)

<sup>23</sup>DT, May 7, 1969.

<sup>24</sup>Interview with Rostam Kavoussi, in The Daily Texan, May 7, 1969.

<sup>25</sup>DT, May 7, 1969.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>DT, November 3, 1968 (editorial)

<sup>29</sup>Margaret C. Berry, "Highlights in the History of Student Participation in Governance at the University of Texas" (Unpublished University History Project, revised, 1980), p. 9.

<sup>30</sup>DT, May 7, 1969.

<sup>31</sup>DT, March 28, 1969.

<sup>32</sup>The Cactus, 1969, p. 354.

<sup>33</sup>DT, May 7, 1969.

<sup>34</sup>DT, May 7, 1969 (editorial).

<sup>35</sup>DT, May 7, 1969.

<sup>36</sup>DT, May 8, 1969.

<sup>37</sup>Krier, p. 11.

<sup>38</sup>Centennial II, p. 30; supplement to DT, April 8, 1983.

<sup>39</sup>Krier, p. 4. It should be underscored here that Krier is speaking critically not of the decision to remove the trees, but rather of the manner in which the student protesters were dealt with when it came time to implement the decision. Once the Board of Regents decided to add more seats to Memorial Stadium rather than relocating the athletic field, Bellmont Hall was included in the expansion to help pay for the project. To build the building, the street had to be moved and the trees had to come down. Personalities clashed as the decision was executed, but Erwin had the legal authority to act, and did so.

<sup>40</sup>DT, October 30, 1969.

<sup>41</sup>Krier, p. 11.

- <sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 11.
- <sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 10.
- <sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 13.
- <sup>45</sup>The Cactus, 1970, p. 172.
- <sup>46</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>47</sup>Krier, p. 5.
- <sup>48</sup>DT, March 5, 1970 (editorial).
- <sup>49</sup>DT, December 2, 1969 (editorial).
- <sup>50</sup>DT, March 11, 1970.
- <sup>51</sup>DT, March 5, 1970 (editorial).
- <sup>52</sup>Krier, p. 15.
- <sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 16.
- <sup>54</sup>DT, April 3, 1970.
- <sup>55</sup>DT, April 2, 1970.
- <sup>56</sup>The Austin American, April 3, 1970.
- <sup>57</sup>DT, March 20, 1970.
- <sup>58</sup>DT, April 3, 1970.
- <sup>59</sup>DT, April 7, 1970 (editorial).
- <sup>60</sup>DT, February 21, 1971 (editorial).
- <sup>61</sup>DT, October 21, 1970.
- <sup>62</sup>DT, October 23, 1970.
- <sup>63</sup>DT, October 28, 1970.
- <sup>64</sup>DT, November 17, 1970 (editorial).
- <sup>65</sup>DT, November 18, 1970.
- <sup>66</sup>DT, November 20, 1970.
- <sup>67</sup>DT, February 7, 1971.
- <sup>68</sup>Interview with Bob Binder, March 1, 1983, p. 2.

<sup>69</sup>The Summer Texan, June 8, 1971.

<sup>70</sup>Binder, p. 4.

<sup>71</sup>Interview with Jenkins Garrett, February 5, 1983, p.11.

<sup>72</sup>Binder, pp. 3-4.

<sup>73</sup>The Summer Texan, June 8, 1971.

<sup>74</sup>Binder, p. 2.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., pp. 3-4.

<sup>79</sup>DT, January 21, 1972.

<sup>80</sup>The Cactus, 1972, p. 26.

<sup>81</sup>Binder, pp. 9-10.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., pp. 15-16. Binder's account is, to an extent, questionable. But then again, so are virtually all other recountings of this affair; answers to the questions of who threatened who with what action and who "backed down" are different, depending upon who is asked. Recognizing that this chronicle may not necessarily be the full story, it has been allowed to stand in the text as an example of the students' view of the incident.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>84</sup>DT, April 5, 1973.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

<sup>86</sup>DT, October 9, 1972.

<sup>87</sup>The Cactus, 1973, p. 236.

<sup>88</sup>DT, October 9, 1972.

<sup>89</sup>DT, May 9, 1973.

<sup>90</sup>DT, April 3, 1973 (editorial).

<sup>91</sup>The Cactus, 1973, p. 236.

<sup>92</sup>DT, September 29, 1972.

- <sup>93</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>94</sup>DT, May 4, 1973.
- <sup>95</sup>DT, April 3, 1973 (editorial).
- <sup>96</sup>DT, April 5, 1973.
- <sup>97</sup>Interview with Frank Fleming, March 19, 1983, p. 4.
- <sup>98</sup>Interview with Sandy Kress, January 3, 1983, p. 1.
- <sup>99</sup>The Cactus, 1974, pp. 124-127.
- <sup>100</sup>Kress, pp. 1-2.
- <sup>101</sup>The Cactus, 1974, p. 127.
- <sup>102</sup>Kress, p. 5.
- <sup>103</sup>Ibid., pp. 6-7, and DT, June 12, 1973.
- <sup>104</sup>The Austin American, March 7, 1974.
- <sup>105</sup>Kress, pp. 7-8.
- <sup>106</sup>Ibid., p. 7.
- <sup>107</sup>Ibid., p. 3.
- <sup>108</sup>Ibid., pp. 5-6.
- <sup>109</sup>The Cactus, 1974, p. 48.

## CHAPTER 8

### 1974/75-1977/78: Disillusionment, Farce and Finale

A wave of conservatism swept across the nation in the mid-'70s, as the energy crisis worsened, inflation soared, and a United States president was implicated in a break-in at the Democratic Party National Headquarters, located in a Washington office complex whose name quickly became a household word. The new conservative attitude was reflected as well on the University of Texas at Austin campus. Gone were most of the polarizing issues of the last 1960s and early 1970s that had cried out for liberal action: the Vietnam War was long over and beginning to fade from memory; overt discrimination against Blacks was virtually unheard of, although in some places it continued in more subtle forms. Students had to a great extent replaced their activist philosophy--that it was their responsibility as individuals to change the world during their college years--with a more practical outlook aimed at getting the best possible education in a reasonably short time. They became interested in career planning and job prospects upon their graduation; enrollment in vocation-oriented degree programs such as business and engineering swelled. Their studies suddenly began to demand a greater proportion of their time, as a high grade point average became a valuable commodity in the increasingly crowded employment marketplace. Overall, students' interest in extracurricular activities, including Student Government, dropped as academics gradually assumed a

higher priority.

1974-75: Frank Fleming

The new atmosphere on campus certainly helped to bring conservative Frank Fleming into the student body presidency, ending four consecutive years of liberal, progressive presidents; student reaction against those years of activist and reformist politics finally caught up with Student Government. Many students saw their elected officials spending a majority of their time debating issues that lacked immediate relevance to the campus, as a 1973-74 outgoing senator realized:

The Senate suffered from chronic dispersal of effort. We were too easily distracted by things we have no control over. Resolutions were debated at great length concerning such things as political freedom in Iran, Chile and southern Louisiana. Such debates took up almost one-half of the meeting time during September through November. The worst part was, we argued the same things every time. . . .

I'm not advocating blinders for the Senate. I am saying that their willingness to waste time on things they had no control over lead to frustration, boredom and cynicism. . . .

As a result, the average student did not tend to give much thought to Student Government; although he was probably aware of its existence, he likely did not see himself as one of its members. Sandy Kress evaluates his term of office in this respect:

I think we touched the average student's life probably only minimally, because the average student again is very separate and apart from student government; they don't interrelate very much. But I think they thought of us as a fairly active and productive student government, if they were thinking about it relatively; if they weren't thinking about it relatively, they probably weren't touched much at all. I'm trying to be as fair as I can. I think we did



a good job, but I suspect probably the average student knew who we were, may have known about some things that we did, may have been touched by it, but I think the nexus was relatively minimal. Even in what I thought was a relatively active year.<sup>2</sup>

Frank Fleming brought an entirely different emphasis to Student Government; where his predecessors had concentrated a great amount of time and effort on off-campus lobbying and issues, where they believed student power lay, Fleming directed his energies primarily to on-campus programs that directly benefited students:

[Y]ou know, I didn't see us that much as making earth-shattering decisions that would last forever and would be put into granite; but really providing services for a large group of people who were, for whatever period of time, in one place, at one time, and had common needs. . . .

I'm not saying that if there's a war going on in Vietnam we shouldn't have referendums [sic] on it, since people our age are fighting those wars; but by and large, the main concern of student government should be to make a student's life on campus as enjoyable and as hassle-free as possible. That to me was the main function of the student government.<sup>3</sup>

This view appeared to be just what the students wanted in a president. However, Fleming's intended program was hobbled by an unusually bitter and long-lasting election controversy. Kress' hand-picked successor, liberal University Reform Coalition candidate Lee Rohn, after losing to Fleming in a runoff, filed a series of complaints against him--later re-filed in the names of five supposedly unconcerned students--alleging coercion and administrative interference with the election, along with three other minor violations. The coercion charge involved a written statement from Cactus editor Liz Daily stating that a Kinsolving Dormitory head resident,

Kathleen Mayne, had offered her "guaranteed or assured" admittance to the LBJ School of Public Affairs if she would support Fleming for president.<sup>4</sup> Fleming recalls that Mayne "felt threatened by Lee Rohn, and she liked me," but that he never solicited her comment or her assistance.<sup>5</sup>

The second charge centered around two "F"s, old incomplete grades, that Fleming had changed to meet the 2.25 GPA requirement the day before the filing deadline for candidates. In both courses, there had been an optional paper or final that Fleming had intended to finish, but not having done so, he opted for the grades he would have received otherwise--a "B" and a "D." A student, Will Featherston, even claimed to have seen a letter telling one of Fleming's professors that he would not receive tenure unless the failing grade was changed to a "B."<sup>6,7</sup> Featherston, however, was never able to produce the alleged letter, saying he destroyed it to "remain unpolitical."<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, students, who were aware of Fleming's close relationship with Frank Erwin during Fleming's work of the previous year as chairman of the Union Building Advisory Committee, were quick to see the powerful regent's hand in the grade change. Although Lee Rohn never mentioned the subject herself, rumor and paranoia spread that Fleming had been "just a token candidate of Frank Erwin's, and all of the horror that that would imply--that the actual regents were infiltrating even our campus elections."<sup>9</sup>

In the end, Fleming was cleared of all charges, first by decision of the Election Commission, and finally, almost a

month after the runoff, on an appeal to the Student Court. The complainants dropped the charge regarding the grade changes due to insufficient and unverifiable evidence. With regard to the coercion charge, the Commission found no evidence that Fleming had "ratified or accepted" the alleged bribe<sup>10</sup> but added that it "acknowledged and condemned the involvement of some members of the administration."<sup>11</sup> (This statement did not refer to Erwin, although it is frequently misconstrued as such; rather, it was directed at Head Resident Kathleen Mayne.)

But even though Frank Fleming was completely exonerated of wrongdoing, the persistent spectre of the long, drawn-out, highly-publicized dispute and investigation proved devastating to his efficacy as president. Fleming explained:

Some people are rather hard-shelled and immune to a lot of things; I personally am not. I have sort of a soft core in the center, although I can protect myself when I need to. But the particular adverse circumstances that I took office in, where there was not just an election challenge, but a long, exhaustive dispute, and allegations that I'd lied, that I'd coerced people into doing things that were illegal--those things really hurt me for years after I was president. I know it affected me all the time I was president; I guess I was always looking over my shoulder . . . wondering whether or not I had the trust and confidence of the people I was trying to lead.<sup>12</sup>

Because he was continuously occupied with the controversy from the day he was elected until he took office, Fleming was not in a position to organize an effective, dedicated staff; nor did he receive any help from past president Sandy Kress. As a result, "leadership and motivation to pursue

projects was lacking in a lot of areas."<sup>13</sup> Also, Fleming devoted a great deal of his time to work on the Union Board rather than to directing the activities of the Senate and the committee system.<sup>14</sup> The end product of all these influences was what the Cactus called a "carry-over year": Student Government was "not entirely innovative," but innumerable projects from Kress' administration or before were continued and expanded. In fact, Fleming's administration probably had a greater percentage of successful programs than any other in the 1970s, because most had had at least a year to incubate.<sup>15</sup>

Undoubtedly the best-remembered project of Fleming's term was the infamous Student Government-sponsored "ZZ Top and Friends' First Annual Texas Size Rompin' Stompin' Barn Dance and Barbecue," held September 1, 1974, in a sweltering Memorial Stadium. The concert, which also featured Santana, Joe Cocker, and Bad Company, drew 80,000 fans and earned nearly \$21,000 profit for Student Government.<sup>16</sup> Another program of enduring significance, partly a result of Fleming's direction on the Union Board, was the wholesale remodeling of the Union building, which, among other things, established the Texas Tavern and provided for the sale of liquor on the UT campus for the first time in history.<sup>17</sup> In the area of student input in University policy-making, Fleming persuaded the University Council to increase student membership on the Council from six to nine (three from Senior Cabinet and six from Student Government).<sup>18</sup> Student Government also was vocal in protesting the regents' capricious firing of UT President

Stephen Spurr early in the school year and set up a special investigating committee on the subject.<sup>19</sup> Off-campus activities, with past president Sandy Kress at the helm of the Texas Student Lobby, received little emphasis from Fleming, but continued to be successful in representing students' opinions to the Legislature.<sup>20</sup>

Funding was not the disaster for Student Government that was anticipated immediately after the regents removed it and the Daily Texan from the student services fee in March 1974. They purportedly took this action as a result of a University System law office interpretation of a Texas Education Act amendment designed to give financial relief to part-time and graduate students;<sup>21</sup> the fee had to be lowered somehow, and those two organizations were thought the most likely to be self-sustaining.<sup>22</sup> But at least part of the reason for suspending mandatory funding for Student Government was that it had become too powerful and too great a threat to the regents and administration: when the Travis County legislative delegation pressed Frank Erwin for an explanation, he answered, "We may lose \$12 million in grants because of Mr. Sandy Kress alleging discrimination when there's no real proof of it."<sup>23</sup> Probably also of significance was a preferential poll of all students conducted during registration by the Office of the Vice-President for Student Affairs that showed that a majority of students themselves did not favor mandatory funding for Student Government--46.1% were in favor of it, but 27.3% felt it should be optional, and 15.5% believed the Uni-

versity should not collect any fees for that body; 11.1% did not respond.<sup>24</sup>

The Board's action was not an attempt to "kill" outright the Daily Texan and Student Government, as is sometimes suggested. If this had been the case, no means for fund-raising would have been allowed; instead, the optional check-off system was provided. Also, in the case of Student Government, University President Stephen Spurr would not have guaranteed as he did to underwrite from his discretionary funds any difference between the previous year's budget and the amount received from the optional fees.<sup>25</sup> In addition, the lucrative ZZ Top concert would not have been held without the help of Erwin, who "started pulling the strings" with Head Football Coach Darrell Royal and the administration to secure permission for the fund-raising event.<sup>26</sup>

This act was, however, an effort by the Board to force both Student Government and the Texan to be responsible to the students: in order to receive funding from their constituencies, both entities would in theory have no choice but to represent their views.<sup>27</sup> In any case, students rallied around Student Government in 1974-75, probably because of the well-publicized controversy; much to everyone's surprise, \$26,464 was received from the optional check-off<sup>28</sup>--more than would have been received from a services fee allocation.<sup>29</sup> With the ZZ Top proceeds, the Student Government had well over \$40,000 at its disposal.

Frank Fleming managed, under the circumstances, to be

a reasonably active and effective president. But he was not as publicly controversial or outspoken as some of his predecessors had been; furthermore, he quickly "got fed up with a completely student mentality," and he ceased to worry about "taking popular positions and student stances."<sup>30</sup> Fleming conceded that his primary shortcoming was in communication with the students. At least partly because he decided not to be concerned about his image and press coverage, the student body did not know about his activities and thus felt that he was uninvolved.<sup>31</sup> The Fleming Administration left the students with the impression of a Student Government that had spent their money only to be ineffective and unproductive, and, again, they were ready for a change.

1975-76: Carol Crabtree

The growing sentiment of disillusionment helped Carol Crabtree become the first woman ever to be elected student body president at the University of Texas at Austin. Crabtree was no newcomer to Student Government; she had served as a student senator under the Benson, Kress, and Fleming administrations. She was an active feminist but otherwise perceived as politically moderate: she won office in a contest against Bill Ware, a dedicated radical, and Talmadge Boston, Fleming's extremely conservative chosen successor.

Crabtree's priorities as president lay in the areas of academic advancement, student services, and equal opportunity. Toward these ends, Student Government improved the accessibil-

ity to students of teaching evaluation forms, upgraded bicycle facilities on campus, started the Daily Texan recycling-box program, and successfully lobbied the administration for increased funding of women's intercollegiate athletics and for the addition of a second female gynecologist at the Student Health Center.<sup>32,33</sup> Another major goal, one that went unfilled, was to reinstate mandatory funding for Student Government and the Daily Texan: the number of optional "check-offs" for fall 1975 dropped 47.7% from the previous year,<sup>34</sup> compelling Crabtree to ask University President ad interim Lorene Rogers (who was temporarily appointed after the Spurr firing in 1974) to make up the \$8,500 deficit from her discretionary funds.<sup>35</sup> Students questioned their government's forced reliance on Rogers' graces; the Texan editor wrote:

Whether this type of funding causes Student Government to be more submissive to administrative whims is a critical point. With mandatory funding, Student Government can afford to be more independent; but if it must constantly wonder where or when its next dollar is coming, it could become inoperative.<sup>36</sup>

But despite student pleas, the Board of Regents in July 1975 voted to retain optional funding through the 1975-76 school year.<sup>37</sup>

The funding debate, however, was quickly subordinated in importance to the two major controversies of that year: the appointment of Dr. Lorene Rogers to the permanent University presidency in the fall, and the efforts to recall Student Government President Crabtree in the spring. Rogers made history in September when she became the first female president



of a major American university--but the circumstances under which she was appointed were unfortunately infamous as well. A Faculty-Student Advisory Committee, whose members were carefully chosen to represent accurately their various constituencies, submitted a list of five acceptable candidates for the University presidency, culled from over 100 possible selections. Rogers was not one of the five. In fact, she had been unanimously rejected by the Committee on at least four separate occasions.<sup>38</sup> The regents had agreed only to "strongly consider" the Committee's recommendations; they were not bound to them, although that is the way in which many people interpreted the agreement.<sup>39</sup>

Students and faculty were outraged when the Board voted 5-3 to appoint Rogers anyway. The Advisory Committee issued a statement calling the action "deplorable" and saying it showed "a most extraordinary cynicism and a blatant disregard of the processes of orderly university governance."<sup>40</sup> The Student Senate also passed a resolution in protest of Rogers' appointment, stating in part:

Never did the Advisory Committee offer Dr. Rogers as a candidate. Never did it support her nomination for president of the University.

We are humiliated, appalled and disgusted that student-faculty input was of such minor importance in the final decision.<sup>41</sup>

Student Government joined the faculty in refusing to support the regental decision, but stressed "that the purpose of our refusal is not to discredit Dr. Rogers but to emphasize our disappointment and dismay that the Student-Faculty Advisory

Committee's input was ignored."<sup>42</sup> On campus, students and faculty boycotted classes and meetings; about 6,000 students packed the Main Mall, shouting for Rogers' resignation; the General Faculty resolved not to work with any committees that reported to the Office of the President. The week-long, nearly continuous series of marches, rallies, teach-ins, boycotts, speeches and so forth--reminiscent of the protests over the firing of President Homer Price Rainey in 1944--received national network television news coverage and was discussed in newspapers around the state.<sup>43</sup>

The protest movement rapidly began to get out of hand, however. A coalition calling itself Students Helping Academic Freedom at Texas (SHAFT) was formed from a variety of campus groups to fight for Rogers' resignation. There was a plethora of reasons that students opposed Rogers, as Judy Spalding, Crabtree's administrative assistant and later president herself, recalls:

There were so many different interests involved that had absolutely nothing to do with Dr. Rogers' appointment. A lot of people were there to oppose Dr. Rogers personally, which was never the original idea of SHAFT, and then it started to pick up absolutely everybody who ever had a grudge against the University.<sup>44</sup>

But Crabtree quite properly insisted that Student Government limit its opposition to the principal and original reason for the protest: that student and faculty input had been ignored in Rogers' selection. SHAFT thus had a negative effect on the students' view of their government, as Crabtree observes:

I think probably many people viewed SHAFT as

a weakness on the part of student government, because student government, though present at all the rallies in opposition to Dr. Rogers. . . . SHAFT seemed to be leading the ball, so to speak, on the opposition movement. So many people probably viewed it as a weakness. The way I regarded it at the time was that we would be missing the boat completely if we didn't stick to the real issue at hand, which was that the regents had ignored student-faculty input.<sup>45</sup>

Many students misinterpreted Crabtree's sentiments; word spread that Student Government "lacked direction" and that the president was cowardly and ineffective.<sup>46</sup> And as if the loss of popular support were not enough, the student leaders themselves totally undermined whatever effectiveness Crabtree had left, as Spalding recalls:

The whole time, Carol was supportive of Dr. Rogers and wanted to work with her--she was president, and she had absolutely every right to feel that way. A lot of us, myself included, felt that that was a real turncoat thing to do and tied Carol's hands in a lot of ways. And even if we didn't do it quite that way, I'm sure that in a lot of ways we did emasculate her term. We went through a whole procedure of getting students to sign up [for committees], and screening processes, and voting by the Senate. . . . Well, we did the worst thing possible, and every time I think of this I just shudder. [T]here was a whole boycott, you understand; everybody was supposed to shut down, and they were supposed to do it until she [Rogers] resigned! We told people "We will go ahead and put your names down; the Senate will go ahead and approve you; but you can't serve." A lot of people did anyway, and who could blame them!? . . . But a lot of them didn't, and what you have is just mass chaos. . . . It was a big mess, and Carol was opposed to it throughout the whole time and lost a lot of ground. All of us wasted an awful lot of energy on the whole thing, and it was just stupid, because--nobody won. Well, we all know who won, but it clearly wasn't the students. . . .<sup>47</sup>

The crisis of confidence in Student Government only worsened in the spring. Once it became obvious that Rogers was not going to resign, protest of her appointment died down.

Some student leaders, including Crabtree, realized the need to end the ineffective boycott of University committees and the University Council because students had no voice in the vital decisions that were being made affecting them; but others vehemently insisted that the boycotts continue,<sup>48</sup> and a well-publicized period of Senate infighting ensued. Finally, a group of Student Government leaders, tired of the constant criticism and charges of powerlessness and ineffectiveness, looked for and found the inevitable scapegoat: Carol Crabtree. On January 28, 1976, Financial Director Sandy Shtofman and Student Senators Susan Krute and Lee Sandoloski announced recall procedures against their president.<sup>49</sup> They charged that Crabtree had authorized the publication of and appropriated funds for a campus housing guide without the permission of the Senate.<sup>50</sup>

In the investigation that followed, the Student Senate exculpated Crabtree; the Senate's final resolution on February 11 acknowledged some irregularities in the President's actions but said her questionable moves resulted from ambiguities in the Student Government constitution rather than official misconduct.<sup>51</sup> But the entire controversy had a disastrous impact on the student body's image of Student Government. Its convulsive deterioration was publicized in the scandal-hungry Texas for weeks. First, Financial Director Shtofman, whom the student leaders respected very highly, resigned in protest February 2, saying:

In four years of association with student

government, I have not seen motivations sink to as base a level as that at which they are now operating. I no longer wish to be associated with an administration which is serving personal, rather than student, interests.<sup>52</sup>

Administrative Assistant Judy Spalding, the president's closest advisor, was quoted the next day as saying that, under the circumstances, it would be best for Crabtree to resign.<sup>53</sup> Shortly thereafter, Spalding followed Shtofman's lead and also tendered her resignation. And between the time that the recall proceedings started and that Crabtree was exonerated, the Texan reported that the entire affair was probably a political move: Lee Sandoloski was himself planning on running for the student body presidency later that spring, with Sandy Shtofman working as his chief strategist.<sup>54,55</sup>

Crabtree evaluates the effect of this controversy, combined with the "failure" of the Rogers protest, on student opinion the end of her term:

Oh, I think it was devastating to the credibility of student government, because when it's advertised all over that you don't have the power to even put forth your recommendations for University President . . . , then you have this in-house fighting in the spring. . . . I look back on it sometimes and wonder if it would have been better for student government as a whole if I had not fought--would it have been better if I had not fought back, and just let things be.<sup>56</sup>

Student government loses credibility the more the infighting and power struggles are publicized. . . . I really believe that the students are not against having a government; but they want it to be a legitimate government, and they want it to be a government that's going to have some power. . . . I believe that after my administration the student body was very, very disillusioned, because it became very obvious to them if it wasn't already that student government, who [sic] was this organization that was supposedly there to provide services

and protect their interests, did not have as much power as we all would have liked to believe it had. So therefore there's a great feeling of disillusionment, and almost a feeling of rebellion, after that.<sup>57</sup>

In fairness to Carol Crabtree, it should be made explicit here that despite whatever might be said about her failure to give strong leadership to the 1975-76 Student Government, she was not directly at fault for the events of that year, nor for what they later precipitated. A student, writing to the Texan editor in rare defense of Crabtree during the recall proceedings, made this point by quoting the late President Harry S. Truman:

"You know, the greatest epitaph in the country is in Arizona. It is in Tombstone, Ariz., and this epitaph said, 'Here lies Jack Williams. He done his damndest.' I think that is the greatest epitaph a man could have. Whenever a man does the best he can, then that is all he can do; and that is what your President has been trying to do. . . ." <sup>58</sup>

#### 1976-77: Jay Adkins

Disillusionment, caused by the infighting and perceived powerlessness of Student Government, sparked the spring 1976 candidacy of a new breed of student politician: the absurdist. The campus occasionally had seen "joke" and protest candidates for president before, but never any like Jay Adkins or his vice-presidential running-mate, Frederick John "Skip" Slyfield II. The two highly intelligent students called their ticket "Art and Sausages" (or "A & S") and sought to expose Student Government as the unrepresentative circus it had become. They promised a new approach:

We're going to drag Student Government wailing

and screeching out onto the streets where students can deal with it. This terrifies the standard hack politico. They don't like doing things in public, they like to deal with other politicians. We're going to put it out there in public. You can't talk about student input until students know what it is doing. And we are obviously the only ones who can get attention and get energy.

We're not interested in telling people what to do, we're not interested in being powerbrokers, we're interested in getting people moving. Now, you've got a choice between straight campus political hacks and people who know that politics start with people, that you change things by getting out on the streets and getting things moving. When we say Art and Sausages, we mean we don't care whether you hang us on the wall or eat us for lunch, but don't forget to laugh.<sup>59</sup>

Adkins and Slyfield said "We're laughing at Student Government because we take students seriously."<sup>60</sup> But that was about the only thing they took seriously, as a sampling of their abundant campaign promises shows:

COMMITTEES. Instead of our opponent's idea to replace the present committee on committees with a new committee on reorganization of SG, we will have the Committee to Put Things on Top of Other Things and the Committee to Keep Things Under Things. These will be supplemented by the Committee For Things and the Committee Against Things.

STUDENT SENATE. The next time the Senate tries to get out of making a tough decision by postponing the vote (uh Lorene? Lorene who?) the A & S goons will chain them into the room: Either they face up to the issues or their bladders burst.

ENVIRONMENT. We will plow up the Main Mall and then plant cabbages. (All plants talk, but only cabbages sing.)

HEALTH. What do students really want--flu shots, birth control? Nonsense. We will set up the Clinic for Social Acceptability, offering permanent hair removal and sweat gland relocation. And of course, euthanasia on demand.

SEX. Politics makes strange bedfellows, and we'll sleep with anyone.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE. To curtail the pointless pedantry of academic gatherings we will require professors to communicate solely by farting and tap dancing. Art and Sausages supports the "publish or

perish" doctrine--any professor who does not publish a book each year will be required to spend the following year dressed as an enormous pear.

UNIVERSITY IMAGE. We will change the inscription on the Main Building from "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," to a more straightforward, "Money Talks."<sup>61</sup>

Jay Adkins and Skip Slyfield offered few concrete proposals, but, like radical Jeff Jones six years before, they promised action:

Student Government at the University of Texas . . . has been and always will be a burnt-out '56 Chevy on blocks waiting to be taken somewhere. Art and Sausages has promised to be the engine.<sup>62</sup>

And, as in 1970, the students responded to this alternative; Adkins and Slyfield swamped the traditional campus political establishment with a landslide 60% of the vote in a runoff election.<sup>63</sup>

The new administration had a few initial successes, in spite of all the absurdity. For example, it persuaded the University to keep the Academic Center open 24 hours a day and started the "buddy system," an escort program for late-night studiers at the library.<sup>64</sup> But its most significant accomplishment was in providing a sound financial base for Student Government for an additional year: when the regents again voted against mandatory funding in late March 1976 and University President Rogers subsequently refused to balance the Student Government budget from her discretionary funds,<sup>65</sup> Adkins and Slyfield mounted an antic drive to stimulate student use of the \$3.15 optional check-off during fall preregistration. They paraded haggardly dressed student senators-



elect, chained together, to the Main Building at noon, in an attempt to "get the process in the public eye"<sup>66</sup> and printed one-eighth-page advertisements in the Daily Texan.<sup>67</sup> And as the Texan reported in September, the effort was an unbelievable success:

Student Government has once again done battle with the forces of mediocrity and beaten them stupid. To date, the epic five-month "Money Talks" optional funding drive (including last week's registration follies) has persuaded more than one-fourth of the student population to check off. When the red tape settled, the UT computers revealed that a grand total of 12,725 had fallen for the snappy patter and smooth moves of Art and Sausages, gaining \$40,083.75 for Student Government.

Asked to comment on the remarkable popularity of an institution he had vowed to laugh into oblivion, Student Government President Jay Adkins was nearly speechless. "I guess they decided to put their money where my mough is," was the only thing he could cough up.<sup>68</sup>

But by the time the fall semester got underway, the Art and Sausages program had begun to fall apart. The fever pitch of raw crazy energy that typified the A & S campaign was nearly impossible to sustain through the long, hot, quiet summer months, and when students returned to school, Adkins wasn't laughing anymore: he was "finding it harder to crank out his requisite joke-a-day, and . . . apologizing 'for not doing what I got elected to do. . . ." [Adkins added,] 'I would call the whole thing pretty much a failure. We never came up with a new system or anything different.'"<sup>69</sup> Also, Adkins' announcement that he was ready to junk the entire Student Government system, starting with the 40-member Student Senate, sparked disagreements between Adkins and the more conservative senators.<sup>70</sup>

Power squabbles pointing to interpersonal political struggles began to surface in the Senate, prompting one senator to say, "We seem to be getting caught in the old patterns; it's almost implicit in playing the game."<sup>71</sup>

By February 1977, one-third of the senators had resigned their posts.<sup>72</sup> Worse, Adkins began to take himself and Student Government very seriously, while Slyfield and the other absurdists wished to continue the mockery. This rift widened until, in February, Adkins advised the regents that "they should get together more with students and faculty." That was the proverbial last straw; the creators and members of Art and Sausages issued a statement "disowning" Adkins:

We . . . are distressed and appalled by Jay Adkins' recent speech to the Board of Regents. We publicly disavow his action and repudiate completely the sentiments expressed in his address. Our efforts, conceived in loving anarchy, have been undermined by his unfortunate remarks.<sup>73</sup>

By March, the reign of absurdity was over. Reflecting the new tone of seriousness, the Senate in its last meeting of the year adopted a resolution stating that Student Government should be referred to by its old name, the Students' Association, in all related references, titles and documents.<sup>74</sup> Attempts to recruit new Art and Sausages candidates failed, and a sober atmosphere prevailed in the spring elections. Students were almost universally disillusioned--even absurdism had failed to cure the ailing student government, which had meanwhile deteriorated still further.

1977-78: Judy Spalding

It was in this environment of pessimism that journalism student Judy Spalding became the University's second female Students' Association president, in a runoff following an apathy-plagued election that saw only 12% of the student body vote--the lowest turnout ever in a spring presidential election.<sup>73</sup> Write-in candidate Amy the Wonderdog polled more votes than two of the presidential candidates.<sup>76</sup> A survey of 1400 students shortly after the election revealed that nearly 60% had no idea what the Student Senate's primary responsibility was, and one-fourth felt student government should not be involved in or have input to either committees selecting administrators or faculty or the selection of the students' attorney or ombudsman. A member of the survey committee noted that this was "definitely a change from the students of eight years ago. It's a combination of apathy and adolescence--the desire to have things done for you."<sup>77</sup> Spalding remembers that, in the wake of A & S, there was "a healthy distrust of everybody and everything, generally, and specifically with the University; but, simultaneously, in a lot of cases the distrust had gone beyond a healthy state."<sup>78</sup>

On April 15, 1977, completely without warning, the Board of Regents returned the Students' Association and Senior Cabinet to mandatory funding by giving the two groups an allocation from the student services fee.<sup>79</sup> The Board gave no explanation for its action, but students postulated many reasons: perhaps it was an attempt to keep student leaders

from having to "go out and focus all the attention on the Students' Association," as Adkins and Slyfield had done, to gain voluntary funding from the students.<sup>80</sup> The Texan proposed another possibility:

[T]he timing and manner of this new action raise a significant question. Are the regents rewarding student government for its quiet ineffectiveness of the last several years?

It may be coincidence, but in the face of the most efficient and effective student government in recent memory, namely the Kress administration, the regents cut off funding, thereby crippling the initiatives of future officers.

Now, the regents have reacted to Jay Adkins' singularly unaccomplished performance as president by reinstating this much-needed funding.<sup>81</sup>

Spalding added that perhaps the move was not only a reaction to the ineffectiveness of Adkins and Slyfield, but also an expression that the Board saw her upcoming administration as "real harmless--what could I do? . . . And by comparison--I mean, look at us; we got ourselves abolished! So that was an accurate assumption, if that's really what the reason was."<sup>82</sup>

With the newly acquired mandatory funding, the Students' Association had an adequate, though by no means luxurious, working budget that enabled it to operate several student service projects, including a summer storage warehouse program, a textbook exchange (with the Association collecting a twenty-five-cent service charge on each book sold, compared to five cents in the 1930s), a plant sale, an all-University Halloween dance, and a Women's Center to coordinate women's activities and information.<sup>83</sup> Spalding notes, "We did what you would call the piddling things . . . to be visible, to involve as many people as possible . . . a lot of real normal things;

nothing really stands out."<sup>84</sup> The city and state lobby committees also continued to be active and reasonably effective.

But the Spalding Administration was fraught with problems from its very beginning. During the summer, Spalding drew criticism from the Texan for holding Senate meetings at different locations and times, including one on the plaza of the communications complex and another at a cafe miles from campus; not only were students not notified in advance of the times and places of the meetings, but the meetings themselves were also confused by poor acoustics and lack of proper seating.<sup>85</sup> In another well-publicized incident in September, Publicity Committee Chairman Kathi Chatas refused Spalding's request that she resign for failure to perform her duties.<sup>86</sup> At the following Senate meeting, Spalding suddenly and unexpectedly backed down from her demand, and the entire remainder of the meeting was devoted to a decision on the disposal of 25 frozen pizzas left over from a poorly publicized Association-sponsored picnic. The headline of the Texan report on the meeting--"Chatas stays; pizzas ordered to go"<sup>87</sup>--reflects the cynicism and wry humor with which students had come to view their Association.

The Texan made note of one of the problems with the Students' Association and suggested its cause:

The tide of student attitudes toward student government is turning; most students derive little or no direct benefit from the actions and efforts of the Students' Association. That, though, is not so much the fault of the people they elect as it is the fault of the structure.<sup>88</sup>

The Students' Association Restructuring Committee (SARC II),

formed by Jay Adkins late in 1976, attempted to address this point. (SARC I had worked for a time under Carol Crabtree but had "lost all of its creativity and credibility."<sup>89</sup>) On October 26, 1977, SARC II presented to the Senate a Students' Association constitution containing a completely new governing structure. The proposed changes included abolishing the Senate and replacing it with (in what seems like a case of déjà vu) an Assembly, with the power only to approve appointments and budgets, using the college councils as a constituent base for the Assembly, and removing the vice-president and establishing instead three directors under the executive to coordinate finances, research and communication.<sup>90</sup>

But the SARC II document failed to win the requisite two-thirds majority approval of the Senate to be presented to the students on a referendum and was sent back to the committee for reworking.<sup>91</sup> The Senate failed on November 9 to reach a quorum to consider the revised constitution;<sup>92</sup> a week later, after several hours of careful, serious consideration and orderly debate, the senators finally rejected it. Said a senator from the Graduate School: "We don't need a patchwork system on this document."<sup>93</sup>

A favorable recommendation to the students of the SARC II constitution and its subsequent ratification might have saved the Association, at least for a few more years: the student body would have desired at minimum to give the new structure a try. But instead, the proposal was not approved. The events that followed were both foreseeable and, in light

of the prevailing mood of disgust with the Students' Association, virtually inevitable. On February 1, 1978, the same day that a 28-column-inch front-page article, sensationally titled "Spalding tags leaders of Association 'hacks,'"<sup>94</sup> appeared in the Texan, two groups of students--the Committee to Retire Aspiring Politicos (CRAP) and the Constructive Abolition Movement (CAM)--came forth to abolish the Students' Association.<sup>95</sup>

CRAP and CAM submitted a petition, signed by 1,400 students,<sup>96</sup> calling for a referendum which asked students to decide among five different options: (1) to keep the Students' Association as it was, (2) to adopt the SARC II constitution that had been rejected by the Senate, (3) to call a new constitutional commission to revise the Association's structure, (4) to abolish the governing structure altogether, or (5) "none of the above." The abolition option provided for the deletion of the sections of the constitution empowering the legislative, executive and judicial branches; the preamble and other articles were left intact. A provision also was made that a new governing structure could be instituted in a special election called by the Election Commission chairman upon petition by a number of students equalling 30% of those voting in the last general election.

The binding referendum was held on March 1, concurrent, ironically, with the spring general election. Controversy was intense, but voter interest and turnout were low, with only 5,146 students bothering to make their feelings known.

And when the ballots were counted, the result did not particularly stun or shock the campus: the option favoring abolition won with 2,644 votes cast in its favor--out of some 42,000 spring semester students--and 2,458 opposing.<sup>97</sup> David Haug, a member of CRAP, said of the referendum:

It's hard to be ecstatic when you get rid of something--but we're excited. Having 5,000 people voting on the referendum has reflected what students think. The other 35,000 don't even care enough about the association to bother to vote and that shows how they think.<sup>98</sup>

Asked to evaluate what students were thinking on that day, Judy Spalding reflected

that they were not being represented; they were in a position for the first and probably the last time in their lives to vote to abolish a government of any sort. You know, that's a heady experience. We weren't representing them. And I fully mean to encompass everyone who preceded me, certainly for the past few years. We couldn't represent them the way they needed to be represented, or in ways that they would truly benefit from it, because of the structure--the agency status, and all that. Our hands were tied, and other parts of our anatomy, and there was nothing we could do--I mean, the best we could do were the garage sales or the dances, an occasional trot down to lobby the Legislature, appearances--we couldn't do a whole lot.<sup>99</sup>

The March 1 referendum was not official, however, until approved by the UT System Board of Regents, and in the interim period, confusion reigned on campus with regard to the status of the Students' Association: did it exist, or didn't it? Or was it just "in limbo"? Spalding recalls that president-elect Roberto Alonzo, who would have become the Association's first Chicano chief executive,

never got over the shock, and the guy who he had picked to be his AA [administrative assistant]



went around saying, "My God, you people are acting like there's no more student government or anything!," because Roberto was having all these interviews and all this, and everyone was saying, "My God, there IS no Students' Association." It was really kind of unfortunate. But anyway, he and his group really never quite comprehended that there was no need to have committee meetings and all that, because there was nothing left. Sad.<sup>100</sup>

Students' Association officers moved quickly to prepare a presentation of the referendum for administrators and the Board of Regents. On March 15, University President Lorene Rogers, stating it was her hope "that the Association will adopt a revised structure in the near future and submit the resulting amendments for administrative and regental action," recommended that the regents approve the referendum results.<sup>101</sup> And, meeting in Galveston on April 7, 1978, with past-President Spalding pleading that the results of the referendum be upheld, the Board of Regents approved the abolition by a vote of six to three, with Regents Jane Blumberg, Ed Clark, and Jess Hay voting "no."<sup>102</sup> After 75 long, rich, and sometimes troubled years, the University of Texas at Austin Students' Association was, at least temporarily, laid to rest.

## CHAPTER 8

Notes

- <sup>1</sup>The Daily Texan (hereinafter cited as "DT"), March 4, 1974.
- <sup>2</sup>Interview with Sandy Kress, January 3, 1983, p. 10.
- <sup>3</sup>Interview with Frank Fleming, March 19, 1983, p. 2.
- <sup>4</sup>DT, March 25, 1974.
- <sup>5</sup>Fleming, p. 12.
- <sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 12-13.
- <sup>7</sup>DT, March 18, 1974.
- <sup>8</sup>DT, March 25, 1974.
- <sup>9</sup>Fleming, p. 11.
- <sup>10</sup>The Austin American, March 23, 1974.
- <sup>11</sup>DT, March 21, 1974.
- <sup>12</sup>Fleming, p. 14.
- <sup>13</sup>DT, April 4, 1975.
- <sup>14</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup>The Cactus, 1975, pp. 126-127.
- <sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 29-30; and DT, September 3 and 12, 1974.
- <sup>17</sup>Fleming, p. 10.
- <sup>18</sup>DT, January 28, 1975.
- <sup>19</sup>The Cactus, 1975, p. 126; and Fleming, p. 10.
- <sup>20</sup>DT, June 6 and 11, 1975.
- <sup>21</sup>DT, March 18, 1974.
- <sup>22</sup>DT, March 19, 1974.
- <sup>23</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>24</sup>DT, March 15, 1974.

- <sup>25</sup>DT, March 19, 1974; and Fleming, p. 3.
- <sup>26</sup>Fleming, p. 7.
- <sup>27</sup>DT, March 19, 1974.
- <sup>28</sup>Letter from Student Government President Carol Crabtree to University President ad interim Lorene Rogers, June 27, 1975 (in Fleming Writings Collection files).
- <sup>29</sup>Fleming, p. 3.
- <sup>30</sup>DT, April 4, 1975.
- <sup>31</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>32</sup>The Cactus, 1976, p. 182.
- <sup>33</sup>Interview with Carol Crabtree Donovan, January 3, 1983, pp. 12-13.
- <sup>34</sup>DT, September 9, 1975.
- <sup>35</sup>DT, January 22, 1976.
- <sup>36</sup>DT, July 28, 1975 (editorial).
- <sup>37</sup>DT, July 28, 1975.
- <sup>38</sup>"A Statement from the Faculty/Student Advisory Committee for the Selection of a President for the University of Texas at Austin" (hereinafter cited as "Committee Statement"), fall 1975, p. 1; from the Fleming Writings Collection files.
- <sup>39</sup>Donovan, p. 8.
- <sup>40</sup>Committee Statement, p. 1.
- <sup>41</sup>In the Cactus, 1976, p. 97.
- <sup>42</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>43</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>44</sup>Interview with Judy Spalding, February 25, 1983, p. 4.
- <sup>45</sup>Donovan, p. 10.
- <sup>46</sup>DT, November 14, 1975 (editorial).
- <sup>47</sup>Spalding, pp. 4-5.
- <sup>48</sup>DT, January 22, 1976.

<sup>49</sup>DT, January 29, 1976.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.; and Donovan, p. 17.

<sup>51</sup>DT, February 12, 1976.

<sup>52</sup>DT, February 3, 1976.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>Donovan, p. 18.

<sup>55</sup>DT, January 29, 1976.

<sup>56</sup>Donovan, p. 18.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>58</sup>DT, February 4, 1976.

<sup>59</sup>DT, March 10, 1976.

<sup>60</sup>From an Art and Sausages campaign flyer, in the Fleming Writings Collection files.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.; and the 1976 Daily Texan Voter's Guide.

<sup>62</sup>"Who put the 'dent' in Student Government?" (flyer encouraging students to check-off the Student Government optional fee), spring 1976; from the Fleming Writings Collection files.

<sup>63</sup>The Austin American, March 12, 1976.

<sup>64</sup>DT, October 11, 1976.

<sup>65</sup>Minutes of the Emergency Conference on Student Government Funding, March 27, 1976; from the Fleming Writings Collection files.

<sup>66</sup>DT, March 29, 1976.

<sup>67</sup>For example, see DT, March 28, 1976.

<sup>68</sup>DT, September 1, 1976 (editorial).

<sup>69</sup>The Austin American, September 17, 1976.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.; and DT, October 5, 1976.

<sup>71</sup>DT, October 5, 1976.

<sup>72</sup>DT, February 21, 1977.

<sup>73</sup>DT, February 14, 1977.

<sup>74</sup>The Cactus, 1977, p. 257.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

<sup>76</sup>DT, March 3, 1977.

<sup>77</sup>DT, March 24, 1977.

<sup>78</sup>Spalding, p. 1.

<sup>79</sup>Press release from the Office of the Deputy Chancellor, University of Texas System, April 15, 1977; from the Fleming Writings Collection files.

<sup>80</sup>Spalding, p. 7.

<sup>81</sup>DT, April 18, 1977 (editorial).

<sup>82</sup>Spalding, p. 7.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., pp. 16-17, 20.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., pp. 18-19, 17.

<sup>85</sup>DT, June 30, 1977 (editorial).

<sup>86</sup>DT, September 15, 1977.

<sup>87</sup>DT, September 22, 1977.

<sup>88</sup>DT, October 14, 1977 (editorial).

<sup>89</sup>Spalding, p. 21.

<sup>90</sup>DT, October 26, 1977.

<sup>91</sup>DT, October 27, 1977.

<sup>92</sup>DT, November 10, 1977.

<sup>93</sup>DT, November 17, 1977.

<sup>94</sup>DT, February 1, 1978.

<sup>95</sup>Spalding, p. 8.

<sup>96</sup>The Cactus, 1978, p. 230.

<sup>97</sup>DT, March 2, 1978.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid.

<sup>99</sup>Spalding, p. 22.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>101</sup>Press release from the UT News and Information Service, March 15, 1978; from the Fleming Writings Collection files.

<sup>102</sup>Press release from the Vice-President for Administration, University of Texas System, April 7, 1978; from the Fleming Writings Collection files.

## CHAPTER 9

### 1978/79-1982/83: Absence and Resurrection

At least some of the students who voted on March 1, 1978, to abolish the Students' Association governing structure sincerely believed that its absence would be only temporary; surely very few anticipated that the reorganization and reinstatement of the Association ultimately would require four and one-half years. Many students probably assumed that the abolition was a move to hasten the badly needed Association restructuring: with the substance of the old constitution eliminated, some group of "responsible" students would soon appear to draft a new document. The Texan editor, writing on the Monday after the regents approved the referendum, expressed all of these sentiments as he issued a call for action:

It is gone. It is but a chapter in our history. That phase of our collective lives is behind us. And with it we should cast away all feelings of bitterness and hopelessness. Never again should we hear cries of ineffective, self-glorifying, and impotent student governance. For those criticisms were appropriate for only what we had, not for what we can--and what we should--have.

Let us chart the course for a new era of democracy for students at the University. Let us design our own destiny as a class. And let us not waver or grow weary as we strive toward our common goal, for perhaps never again shall we have this opportunity. Let us start anew!

The events of recent months have been painful and invidious for many. But for the overwhelming majority, the matter was not an issue at all. However, we should not assume from their lethargy that we do not need some form of student government or that we are incapable of administering our own affairs. Rather, we should simply accept the fact that we have not been allowed to do so in the past. Upon our mistakes--and upon the mistakes of former

students--let us learn and build a new union of students.

We will play the cruelest joke of all upon ourselves if we sit pretty oblivious to our problems, and let this calling fall upon deaf ears. The simple chore was determining that we no longer wanted what we had. But the challenging, yet certainly conquerable, task of asserting ourselves and our rights before the administration lies ahead of us.

But he later wisely counseled:

Let us not fall prey to expediency and hastily form yet another imperfect union, conceived in fear and plagued with age-old problems. Instead, we must take this opportunity and pause long enough to assess our problems, our strengths and weaknesses. For 75 years we have lived with various forms of student government. Surely, we can do without it for a short while as we calculate our fate.<sup>1</sup>

Six months later, the Texan had adopted a different standpoint. When two groups, the Student League and Students Concerned About Representation (SCAR), began trying to attract student support for their revised constitutions, the editor charged in a column entitled "Leave Us Alone" that the members of both organizations were acting more out of self-interest than concern with the student body's desires:

Let us elaborate. After reviewing the final tally on the vote to abolish student government, it is clear the students voted to do away with student government, period. Voters gave no mandate to any group to rewrite the constitution or restructure the institution and place it before students.

Now, there are those who say the second option which garnered the most votes on that fateful ballot dealt with revising the association's structure. And this is true. But the key word here is "second." This option did not win. . . .

When these groups say they are working in our interests, we have to respond, "Who asked you to?" It's a curious thing about groups such as the two currently trying to force themselves on students; they claim to work in our interests, they say they are following a distant voice crying "Restructure,



restructure." But we have yet to meet a single individual who belongs to these mysterious noises.<sup>2</sup>

The "leave us alone" sentiment continued until the fall of 1979. In the interim period, many of the ongoing functions that had been executed by the Students' Association were taken over by other entities. The Senior Cabinet became, by default, the voice of the students to the faculty and administration; even though its members recognized that they were not technically representative of the campus because they were appointees, the Cabinet rapidly expanded its role in both policy-making and programming and simultaneously grew in prestige and influence.<sup>3</sup>

Students continued to serve on the University Council and University-wide committees, but they were selected by the University president with assistance from the vice-president for student affairs and the dean of students.<sup>4</sup> This system first came under fire when it was time to select a replacement for President Lorene Rogers. The two students who were to sit on the presidential candidate screening committee were chosen by a five member panel, two of whom were administrators appointed by Rogers; the students selected by this panel were then subject to Rogers' approval. The Texan called this route "patently unfair and nothing short of a farce" and suggested that instead the Senior Cabinet be allowed to make the student appointments.<sup>5</sup>

Many of the programs formerly run by the Students' Association were preserved as well, at least for a time. For instance, the newspaper recycling bin program was adopted by

the University Mobilization for Survival, with some help from Texas Student Publications, but it was later quietly discontinued. The Texas Union and CinemaTexas increased the number of films they screened to help pick up the slack from the now-defunct Students' Association Film Program. Senior Cabinet took responsibility for administering the annual teaching excellence awards program, as well as publishing a student housing guide and a guide to courses and instructors. The Texas Student Lobby maintained its vigorous program of representing student interests before the Legislature, although it could no longer properly claim to represent the entire campus population. And the Election Commission, left intact after the abolition, not only continued to conduct all campus elections but also, in the absence of the Student Court, became a powerful adjudicatory body. Additionally, all of the most significant student service programs originated by student government--the Student Health Center, the shuttle bus system, the Union, and so on--had been over time made into independently operating entities; Frank Fleming observes, probably accurately, that

the students did not suffer enough without student government. If student government had had all the power over all the services, and when they voted out student government, the Student Union building closed down and locked its doors, the student Co-Op closed down and locked its doors, the shuttle bus system quit running, and the Health Center ended, you'd have seen those students run back to the polls in about two weeks and DEMAND that student government be put back on this campus.<sup>6</sup>

It was not until the fall of 1979 that a serious, organized effort commenced to revive the Students' Association.

A group of about 25 students, calling themselves Students for Student Government (SSG) and led by Liberal Arts sophomores David Bright and Amy Johnson and Business junior Will Wright, began in October to secure the 1,500 signatures required to hold an unscheduled election for a constitutional convention; by early November, SSG had gathered over 2,300 signatures and presented them to the Election Commission.<sup>7</sup> And on November 15, with about 3,200 students (approximately 7% of the total enrollment) casting ballots, the campus gave the go-ahead for the convention by a nearly two to one margin.<sup>8</sup> The following February, the students elected 25 delegates to the convention, five from each undergraduate class and five graduate students; only around four percent of the student body voted in this election, with forty percent of those voting choosing "none of the above"--a larger proportion of the vote than any candidate received.<sup>9</sup> The delegates gathered soon afterward and elected David Bright as their chairman and Amy Johnson as vice-chairwoman.<sup>10</sup>

The constitutional convention completed the new document on March 31, 1980. The constitution differed radically from any other under which the Students' Association previously had operated: it organized the governing structure on what the delegates called a "managerial," rather than a "monarchical," basis.<sup>11</sup> Students would elect six representatives from each of five campus voting districts; within each district, one representative would be elected to each of six standing Student Assembly Committees, for a total membership

in the Assembly of thirty students. The convention intended the standing committees--Students' Rights/Services, Consumer/Housing/Environmental Affairs, Education and University Policy, Communications, Finance, and Lobbying--rather than the executive, to serve as the main representative power base of the student government. Overseeing the committees and answering to the Association president would be six vice-presidents, with those responsible for Finance and Lobbying to be appointed by the President (with two-thirds of the Assembly's approval), and the other four to be elected at large.<sup>12</sup>

The new constitution met with immediate and powerful opposition, particularly from students who had been in attendance at the University during student government's chaotic final years. A group calling itself APATHY/CYNIC, adopting in part the message and name of the 1968 A.P.A.T.H.Y. party, campaigned strongly against the document; they cited the apparently low interest among students in supporting the Association as reason not to resurrect it.<sup>13</sup> The Senior Cabinet likewise voted against endorsement of the new constitution. Chairwoman Julie Tindall explained that, while the Cabinet was in favor of an "active, viable, well-funded student government," it could not support a student government that it believed the students did not desire; too, the Cabinet did not believe the constitution to be a "workable and equitable" document.<sup>14</sup> In an acrimonious Texan guest column, Plan II student John Schwartz (later editor of UTmost magazine and then of The Daily Texan) also criticized the instrument and its framers:

8 The new Students' Association constitution is a naive effort, a too-hastily-slapped-together bumble that reflects the inadequacies of the people who wrote it. . . .

These kids don't understand what was wrong with the old Students' Association, nor what's necessary to fix it . . . Read the new constitution. It is an attempted compromise between plagiarizing the U.S. Constitution and the Regents' Rules and Regulations. As you can probably guess, it can't be done. . . .

This juvenile attempt at a constitution will create a Students' Association with all the faults of the old one: no power, the same squabbling and the same regental domination. It's too bad, but it looks as if the convention has carved a new niche for resume padders deeper and more secure than the last one.<sup>15</sup>

The new constitution was finally put before the voters on October 8, 1980. About nine percent of the student body voted, with 1,938 giving their approval to the document and 1,935 opposing it; the three vote margin of passage prompted APATHY/CYNIC President Kerry McGrath to say, "I find this a little less than convincing that students want a student government."<sup>16</sup> There were, however, several documented irregularities in the polling procedures, including polls that did not open on time and students who were not allowed to vote because they lacked current University ID cards.<sup>17</sup> The Election Commission subsequently ruled, in response to an appeal, that in view of the three vote margin the irregularities could possibly have prejudiced the outcome of the election; it called for a second, supplemental election in November, in which students who had voted in the first election were prohibited from voting. The tallies from the two elections were to be tallied. Before the second election, APATHY/CYNIC members and other opponents of student government campaigned vigorously

against ratification of the new constitution,<sup>18</sup> and their efforts were successful: the document was soundly defeated by an aggregate vote of 2,365 in favor of and 3,237 opposed to its adoption.<sup>19</sup>

Student government supporters withdrew to regroup, and no further mention of the subject was heard until fall of 1981, when members of APATHY/CYNIC, now calling themselves Associated Students, began work on another draft of a Students' Association constitution. Shortly thereafter, a second coalition of students, including Senior Cabinet Chairwoman Tindall and several members of Associated Students, formed an organization named Group Effort and created their own document. Meanwhile, Students for Student Government was still present, though somewhat amorphous in structure; after the Group Effort/Associated Students coalition presented its constitution on January 20, 1982, the three groups openly clashed over changes in the instrument, alienating more and more students. In mid-February, Associated Students leaders McGrath and Dean Sadler withdrew their organization from the coalition.<sup>20</sup>

During the next week, Group Effort and Associated Students independently submitted to the Election Commission petitions containing signatures sufficient to place both of their proposed constitutions before the student body for a vote. The two documents possessed significant differences,<sup>21</sup> the most readily apparent of which was the fact that the Associated Students proposal was less than half as long as that of Group Effort. The former called for a constitutional convention

to complete the organization, asserting that this approach would boost student participation, while Group Effort members claimed that the open meetings they conducted while writing and amending their document already had constituted such a convention. Also, the Associated Students constitution emphasized immediate power, while its competitor placed greater emphasis on instituting the structure first and seeking additional power later. The Associated Students proposal also included a highly controversial innovation--the so-called "suicide clause"--which provided that, in the event that (1) the constitutional convention's final document was not approved by the votes of at least 5,000 students, or (2) the Board of Regents made any change in the document, the proposal would be rendered "wholly null and void."<sup>22</sup> Associated Students members felt that this strong position was necessary to "stand up to the regents," while Group Effort members supported a more cooperative approach.

On March 10, 1982, students went to the polls to complete a three-part referendum ballot. The first part asked students to indicate simply whether or not they were in favor of re-establishing student government at the University; those who responded affirmatively were then allowed in the second part to select which of the two proposals, Associated Students' or Group Effort's, they preferred. In the third portion of the ballot, students voted on support for a rider attached to the Group Effort document that directed any new student government to seek immediate control of the student services fee.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the two pro-reinstatement groups' almost constant presence in the news for over three months before the election, voter turnout was disappointingly low: only 8.5% of the student body, reflecting the apathy that Daily Texan artist Michael Fry satirized in his election day cartoon (Appendix II). In the first section of the ballot, 2,485 students voted in favor of student government, with 1,400 voting against it; in the second, 1,470 (3.2% of the student body) preferred the Group Effort document, while 932 opted for the Associated Students proposal. The rider also was supported by an over two to one margin.<sup>24</sup> After hearing and issuing rulings in a long series of challenges to the election, the Election Commission certified the results in early April and sent the new constitution to the University administration and the Board of Regents for approval.

During the summer months, the Board studied the document and, at its August meeting, made several changes in it, some of which had been recommended by University President Peter T. Flawn. The obvious alterations included raising the minimum grade point average and course load requirements for candidates for student government office and striking a clause providing for the Students' Association vice-president to serve as chairman of the Senior Cabinet.<sup>25</sup> (The framers of the constitution had included this article so as to unify the two representative bodies and avert the possibility of power struggles between them.)

Several other changes made by the regents were more



subtle but also potentially more damaging to the Association's autonomy. For example, Group Effort had included a rather "flexible" clause giving the Association the power to raise funds through optional fees; the Board added the phrase "in accordance with the established University procedures for optional student services fees." The regents added similar qualifications to the sections of the constitution concerning the powers to allocate the mandatory student services fee and appoint students to faculty, presidential, and University-wide committees. Law/public affairs student John Denson, one of the authors of the document, points out that these additional clauses gave the University administration control over numerous critical decisions that would be made by the Association, thus potentially reducing its power.<sup>26</sup>

In late August, the regents requested a panel of five law professors to determine if the changes made in the constitution warranted another student vote for approval; the answer was a unanimous "yes," and the Election Commission set the referendum for October 16, 1982. On that day, six percent of the approximately 48,000 students enrolled for the fall semester cast ballots. After a four year and seven month absence, student government was reinstated at the University of Texas at Austin by a vote of 1,707 to 1,178.<sup>27</sup>

There were several possible reasons for the relatively easy passage of the new constitution. First and foremost, by the fall of 1982 there were very few students still on campus who remembered the difficult last years of student government

before it was abolished: the campus population had undergone an almost complete turnover, removing much of the popular opposition that the constitutional convention document had encountered two years before. Furthermore, the summer vacation interrupted discussion of the constitution, and the final vote occurred early in the new semester; most students probably did not study the changes that had been made, assuming that it was essentially the same document they had approved the previous spring.

But between the October 6 referendum and the scheduled November 10 election of new Students' Association officers and senators, the serious campaign atmosphere lightened immeasurably when Hank the Hallucination, a character from Daily Texan artist Sam Hurt's comic strip "Eyebeam," declared his candidacy for student body president in the October 19 "Eyebeam" strip (Appendix II). John Denson, who soon became one of the leaders of Hank's campaign, recalls that Hurt got the idea from his fellow law students; it was originally intended as a joke, but after the first strip appeared, students--first in the law school, then across campus--began asking themselves, "Why shouldn't Hank run?"<sup>28</sup> Artist Hurt responded to the growing enthusiasm with a series of comic strips in which Hank promoted his candidacy.

The joke got bigger, and at a startling rate. Denson attributes Hank's instant popularity to the fact that students could not possibly be suspicious of him: "Of all the people that I've come in contact with in student government, Hank's

the only one I felt I could trust."<sup>29</sup> Conceived in fun, Hank's candidacy had serious undertones, indicating that some students were dissatisfied with the new constitution and were not taking it seriously. Said Hank's campaign manager, Steve Patterson, "He's the perfect candidate for the illusion of student government."<sup>30</sup> Hank's campaign slogans--"Vote Your Mind" and "I Am the Candidate of Your Dreams"--also reflected the hallucination's popular appeal.

Although Hank could not be certified as a candidate because he was not a registered student, a 1,200-signature petition--with all the names collected in a mere two days--submitted by Hank's supporters compelled the Election Commission to place on the ballot a referendum question ordering the tabulation and release of the character's write-in votes.<sup>31</sup> But Hank, even in his campaign workers' wildest dreams, surely must never have expected the magnitude of his success on November 10: when all the ballots were counted, Hank had outpolled his nearest human opponent by a better than two to one margin, receiving 3,013 votes compared to Pat Duval's 1,486, Paul Begala's 1,327, and J. Wray Warren's 644.<sup>32</sup>

Hank probably brought to the polls many of the students who would not normally be involved; when Hank's votes are deducted from the total turnout that day, the remaining number, about 3,000 voters, closely typifies the average voter turnout for most campus elections of the past several years. John Denson points out that, in a way, the so-called "Hank phenomenon" represents a benchmark indication of the widespread

interest that student government could potentially arouse, if it is able to capture the imagination of the average student.<sup>33</sup> The voter turnout in the November 17 presidential runoff election lends further support to this idea: 4,328 votes were cast, representing only about two-thirds of the general election participation.<sup>34</sup> In that election, forced by Hank's earlier candidacy, liberal arts senior Paul Begala defeated Pat Duval by a tally of 2,374 to 1,863 to become the first president of the new University of Texas Students' Association.<sup>35</sup>

On December 1, 1982, Begala, Vice-President Jon McNeil, and the new student senators were sworn into office by University Vice-President for Student Affairs Ronald Brown. Begala had just four months to assemble virtually from scratch a credible, functional structure that would gain the respect of the still-skeptical student body; he reflected at the end of his term: "It was sort of 'microwave government' here--we tried to get as much done in as short a time as possible, and I think it worked."<sup>36</sup> The new president established, with the Senate's approval, 10 Senate committees--Academic Affairs, Legislative Affairs, University Policy, Citizen's Affairs, Communications, Consumer Affairs, Students United for Rape Elimination (SURE), Student Services, Rules and Constitutional Amendments, and Finance--each composed of four or five senators and several students drawn from the student body.<sup>37</sup> Begala, who openly admits to being anti-Greek, says he was "just stunned" by how well the members of the Greek-dominated Senate cooperated with each other and with him, although many senators

later "dropped out of the process."<sup>38</sup>

Taking into account the short period of time in which they had to work, the new student leaders were remarkably effective. The one project that received the most publicity was SURE, a free, volunteer-based campus walking escort service patterned after a similar program at Stanford.<sup>39</sup> A second critical task was to publicize and popularize the Association; this job fell to the Communications Committee, which developed a Students' Association logo and a series of advertisements for the Texan (Appendix II). The Legislative Affairs Committee worked in concert with the Texas Student Lobby to oppose bills in the Legislature raising the drinking age and increasing tuition rates.<sup>40</sup> The Association also enlisted the aid of State Senator (and former student body president) Lloyd Doggett in introducing a bill to give students effectively increased control of student fees.<sup>41</sup> But his most important accomplishment during those four months, Begala believes, was to give the Association aggressive, vigorous "direction":

I hope I've left a certain energy and a certain style and a certain vigor; but I know I've left a certain direction. I think it has been so crucial--I've been pushing this all year, at every Senate meeting--not to get bogged down in the internal matters; not to make student government's only job to allocate fees on campus, or to fight over whether or not the president should get a large salary, or to draw up bylaws and constitutions and committees. That's all kind of crap. But we've moved in some real solid directions.<sup>42</sup>

On April 4, 1983, Paul Begala passed the president's gavel to his successor, business senior Mitch Kreindler, who had defeated his runoff opponent, Tom Dunlap, on March 9 by a

vote of 1,644 to 1,260.<sup>43</sup> Kreindler, who comes into the presidency from outside student government (he was 1982-83 president of the College of Business Administration Council), is somewhat more conservative in his views than Begala; he believes in concentrating the Association's efforts more in on-campus projects than off, though by no means neglecting the latter area.<sup>44</sup> As the Students' Association's first full-term president, Kreindler represents the student body's commitment to--or at the very least, acceptance of--a permanent enduring student government. On his first day in office, he described well the task ahead: "The greatest thing I think I can do is to make sure that . . . credibility is established, to insure that this organization will be a long-lasting organization, as it was in the past."<sup>45</sup>

The Students' Association at the University of Texas at Austin has, perhaps, returned to stay.

## CHAPTER 9

Notes

<sup>1</sup>The Daily Texan (hereinafter cited as "DT"), April 10, 1978 (editorial).

<sup>2</sup>DT, October 2, 1978 (editorial).

<sup>3</sup>DT, May 5, 1978.

<sup>4</sup>DT, June 5, 1978.

<sup>5</sup>DT, August 29, 1978 (editorial).

<sup>6</sup>Interview with Frank Fleming, March 19, 1983, p. 16.

<sup>7</sup>DT, October 26, 1979; and The Austin American-Statesman, November 7, 1979.

<sup>8</sup>DT, November 16, 1979.

<sup>9</sup>DT, April 8, 1980 (editorial).

<sup>10</sup>DT, February 26, 1980.

<sup>11</sup>DT, April 14, 1980.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., and the Constitutional Convention's proposed Students' Association Constitution, as printed in DT, April 2, 1980.

<sup>13</sup>DT, October 6, 1980 (letters in "Firing Line").

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>DT, April 8, 1980.

<sup>16</sup>DT, October 4, 1982.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>DT, November 5, 1980.

<sup>19</sup>DT, January 14, 1981.

<sup>20</sup>DT, October 4, 1982.

<sup>21</sup>DT, March 3, 1982.

<sup>22</sup>Associated Students' proposed constitution, as printed in DT, March 3, 1982.

<sup>23</sup>DT, March 11, 1982.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>DT, October 4, 1982.

<sup>26</sup>Telephone interview with John Denson, April 4, 1983  
(not transcribed).

<sup>27</sup>DT, October 7, 1982.

<sup>28</sup>Denson interview.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>DT, October 27, 1982.

<sup>31</sup>DT, November 4, 1982.

<sup>32</sup>DT, November 11, 1982.

<sup>33</sup>Denson interview.

<sup>34</sup>DT, November 18, 1982.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Interview with Paul Begala, April 5, 1983, p. 4.

<sup>37</sup>DT, December 2, 1982.

<sup>38</sup>Begala, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., pp. 9-10.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., pp. 2-3.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>43</sup>DT, March 10, 1983.

<sup>44</sup>Interview with Mitch Kreindler, April 5, 1983, pp. 7-8.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 9.



PART III:  
A LOOK AHEAD

## CHAPTER 10

### Conclusions and Recommendations

And so, we come in our history to the present day. We have seen that, in various ways, the University of Texas Students' Association has experienced many of the same general "growing pains" that student governments at colleges and universities across the nation have encountered, particularly within the last two decades. Additionally, we might observe that the Students' Association at Texas has enjoyed, on the whole, greater success than most of its counterparts in performing the three functions of student government that we isolated in Chapter 1--student participation in governance and in management, and provision of needed student services. Indeed, until the end of the 1960s, students and faculty at the University consistently set the pace for other institutions to follow in questioning and then defining the student's role in the campus community, with regard to such issues as participation in university policy-making and elimination of in loco parentis-related practices. Student government at Texas likewise avoided several of the pitfalls to which (as we saw earlier) some such organizations at other schools fell prey, such as shifting to an almost exclusively service orientation and thus in effect becoming a student union; or constantly seeking confrontation with the faculty, resulting in an unwillingness on the part of that body to delegate any power or allow any input into decision making.

And yet, research indicates that the University of Texas is the only major institution of higher education anywhere in the nation to have totally eliminated an existing student government structure for any significant length of time. True, there continued a few specialized, quasi-government bodies, such as the Texas Union Board of Directors, the University Co-Op Board, and so forth; but these groups were by definition restricted to particular jurisdictions. Similarly, students continued to be seated on faculty and University committees--but the administration selected the individuals who served, a process that hardly yielded in those chosen a sense of responsibility to the student body. In the period of student government's absence, the Senior Cabinet expanded its academic programming and policy-making function into the role of acting as "the voice of the students." But, in actuality, it was not; it too was not directly representative of the students, and its members were aware of this fact. With the end of the Students' Association in 1978, the only student organization potentially capable (although it was not doing so at the time) of legitimately representing student opinion in all areas was silenced.

Why then, we must ask, did this anomaly come about? Certainly this question is the one most frequently raised concerning the Association by both curious students and serious scholars alike; yet there seems to be no agreement on an answer. Even among the former student body presidents interviewed for this study--those people who were closest to the

situation--a clear consensus is lacking. Each posits a slightly different reason for the passage of the March 1978 referendum. It would therefore be appropriate for us here, before proceeding to consider the Association's future prospects, to attempt an integration of these several ideas into a plausible explanation for this most unusual occurrence.

What caused the abolition of the Students' Association?

No single event, person, group, or student government administration was responsible for the abolition. However, we may identify three particular circumstances--two internal and one external to the University--that, with their associated repercussions, combined to bring about this result: the election of radical student body president Jeff Jones in 1970, the appointment of Dr. Lorene Rogers to the University presidency in 1975, and the changing political and social climate on campuses nationwide during the Seventies. Any one of these occurrences alone would probably not have brought about the abolition; indeed, other schools were subject to the same national trends, and a few even elected radical student presidents, but none saw their existing student governments completely eliminated.

At the University of Texas at Austin, as we noted in Chapter 7, the relationship between students and administrators had become somewhat uneasy by the late Sixties: for the first time, student leaders were expressing their desires to the University in terms of demands rather than proposals or requests and were openly criticizing the administration

when these demands were not fully met. Despite the best efforts of the faculty and administration smoothly to integrate students into the University decision-making infrastructure, all parties concerned were slightly tense and uncertain in their new roles. Thus, the stage was set; when the students in 1970 elected Jeff Jones to the presidency, an almost total breakdown in communications ensued between the students and the Board of Regents and, to a lesser extent, between the students and the campus administration. In search of a more responsible student voice, the regents and the administration began turning to the Senior Cabinet and other groups that they viewed, probably correctly, as better representatives of student opinion.

Three aggressively liberal student body presidents in succession subsequently sought to reverse this trend. But they did so not by attempting to demonstrate cooperation, responsibility, and a willingness to compromise, but rather through the employment of confrontational politics and routine bypassing of lower levels of decision-making authority. This strategy was undeniably effective in achieving their short-term goals. But in the long run, the Binder, Benson, and Kress administrations probably caused more harm than good: they presented views far to the left, on the political spectrum, of the vast majority of University of Texas students, who had remained relatively conservative throughout the period. Only a vocal, active, well-publicized, liberal core of students was being represented accurately; and it was probably this

fact that compelled the Board of Regents to place Student Government on optional funding, in the hopes that such an action would force it to voice more carefully the opinions of a larger segment of its constituency.

By 1973-74, the impact of the second major circumstance leading to the abolition was becoming evident: the so-called "student movement" was dying out nationwide. Students turned away from activism, becoming more private and conservative. They lost interest in extracurricular activities, including student government, as the rapid decline in voter turnout between 1974 and 1978 indicates. This shift in the campus atmosphere brought about an environment in which disappointment with student government's performance could potentially trigger an abolition movement: because most students did not vote, they were not accurately represented; and because they felt that they were not being represented, they began to lose confidence in the student government. By the time Judy Spalding won the presidency in a dismally low-turnout election in 1977, students in all parts of the political spectrum were disappointed: they had had Sandy Kress, seen by many as too liberal; they had tried an ultra-conservative, Frank Fleming; then they had a moderate, a woman, Carol Crabtree; and finally, the series culminated in complete anarchy with Jay Adkins and Skip Slyfield. Kress explains:

So the students tried all of these things, and I think at the end of those experiences they said, "We tried it all, and not a one of them did much of any enduring quality. We reacted from one, to the other . . . and we really couldn't find what we wanted . . . It doesn't mean anything, so why

have it around?"<sup>1</sup>

But student government might have endured nonetheless, had it not been for the third major circumstance leading to the abolition: the 1975 appointment of Dr. Lorene Rogers to the University presidency even though she was not recommended by the Faculty-Student Advisory Committee. The refusal of Student Government President Carol Crabtree to take an active role in SHAFT, as discussed in Chapter 8, was misinterpreted by the student body as a sign of cowardice and weakness in its government. This image also probably played a great role in precipitating the Senate infighting and charges against Crabtree during the following spring. But the felling blow was dealt when it became apparent that Rogers had no intention whatsoever of resigning: the student and faculty protest had "failed"--even though, as noted earlier, changing a controversial decision by the Board of Regents is a near-impossible task--and students placed the blame on their "impotent" Student Government. The grave had been dug.

As Judy Spalding took office in fall 1977, students were almost universally disillusioned. Furthermore, without debating the wisdom or the intent of regental actions taken during the 1970's toward the student government, we can safely say that students perceived the Association as powerless, directly because of actions taken by the Board. True, by this time, most didn't care anyway; but those few politically aware individuals who did saw the student government's problems quite clearly:

In the first place, no one was paying enough attention to vote and to participate. Nobody cared, and there is a point at which it is not proper or wise for an entity to have public dollars available to it or for it to spend those dollars unless it is demonstrably representative in some way. So I think it just became so vestigial that it didn't have sufficient influence to merit going on.<sup>2</sup>

It was this handful of students that started CAM and CRAP and began passing petitions to force the abolition referendum. From that point on, the movement gained momentum in a manner similar to the "Hank phenomenon" that occurred five years later: Frank Fleming explains that people between the ages of 18 and 22 are naturally a bit fickle--"you're supposed to have a little fun in those years"--and adds, "I think somebody just sort of dared the students to do it, and they said, 'Well, sure we can vote student government out--you just watch us!'"<sup>3</sup> And they did.

Thus, although there had been sporadic talk of abolishing the student government at Texas for many years, as we have previously seen, never had the conditions been quite right for a serious, organized, and determined abolition movement to get under way--not at least, until 1978, when these three separate events of the preceding 10 years combined to create an environment in which such a movement would not only be started, but would gain the support of an electorate that felt it truly had nothing to lose.

#### Recommendations for the Future

Current Students' Association President Mitch Kreindler frankly admits that "a referendum could come up



tomorrow to abolish student government. There's no way to stop that . . . and there's a possibility it could pass. We need to eliminate that possibility."<sup>4</sup> He is right on all counts. Each of the former student body presidents who was interviewed for this study was queried, "Do you think student government is a feasible exercise today, on a campus with a population of near 50,000 students?" Every single individual answered affirmatively, and almost all agreed that, if anything, student government must play an even more central role in student life simply because, with that number of people, there are still more problems that need attention but do not receive it. None of the former presidents expressed the often-voiced generic objection that the University has become "just too big" to permit a workable student government; however, several added that the job of conducting such a government is of considerably greater difficulty today than it was when they held office. The Students' Association must meet new challenges in a world that is far more complex, and a campus that represents a greater diversity of viewpoints, than ever before.

How, then is the University of Texas Students' Association successfully to execute its formidable mission, while simultaneously avoiding potential abolishment? Hopefully, the history of the Association, presented in Part II, provides some suggestions to this end; but let us now, in conclusion, attempt to distill those ideas into a few concrete recommendations (numbered below in parentheses) for the future.

Probably the single best recipe for circumventing student disenchantment with the Students' Association is for student leaders to (1) conscientiously and consistently strive to represent the student constituency in every action undertaken or decision made. The point bears repeating: always, without exception, represent the student constituency. Failure to do so, particularly in these first few years of rebuilding the Association, will alienate the student body and spell certain death for student government. This charge is by far the most difficult that the Association must face, for two reasons. First, most student leaders never run for re-election due to academic and time pressures (for instance, no elected president of the Association in the last 50 years has run a second time for office); for practical purposes, the vast majority are "lame ducks" from the moment they take office, and thus feel little or no responsibility to the student electorate.

Second, the Students' Association frequently professes to represent the "student interest," when in actuality it is only voicing the opinions of its members, which it believes coincide with the student interest. For example, the Association has recently been involved in lobbying to defeat a proposed legislative increase in the drinking age; but although this effort benefits that segment of the campus under age 21--most freshmen and sophomores, with some juniors--it does not take into account the opinions, such as those expressed in letters to the Texan's "Firing Line," of many

upperclassmen and graduate students (and some lowerclassmen as well) who are apparently more cognizant of the state's DWI problems, which the proposed bill is intended to alleviate. Is the opinion of this latter group being represented? If the Students' Association were to speak out in favor of an international nuclear weapons freeze, as Paul Begala has proposed,<sup>5</sup> would it be speaking for the students, or just for the student leaders?

These are questions that students, administrators, and public policymakers have asked and will continue to ask, particularly while, in view of dismal voter turnouts, they can level the charge (fallacious though it may be) that the Association leaders represent only the handful of students who voted for them. A possible remedy to the problem of accurate representation would be to (2) establish open, effective and continuous two-way communication with the student body. The Student Senate and the executive branch must seek out student opinion and input on most significant issues before they consider them. Possible methods to accomplish this goal might include telephone polls, multi-issue referenda, gripe boxes, "Meet the President" forums, and so on. Senators should also be strongly encouraged to develop some preferably ongoing methods of soliciting input from and gauging opinions of their constituencies. This information gathering process is worthless if it is only conducted ex post facto: the resolution to provide private phones in the women's dorms and the Student Assembly's provision of sup-

port for a tuition increase in the 1950s are two examples of the wastage of time, effort, and resources that occurs when student opinion is discovered too late to be contrary to the actions of student government.

Communication must also flow in the other direction, from the Students' Association to the student, so that the latter is kept informed of the activities of the Senate and the various committees. The average student should not see student government as "just another extracurricular activity for the campus politicos"; he or she must be convinced that he or she is an integral, functional part of the Students' Association--an organization that is constantly present, active, and involved in serving the students. Student leaders must "take student government to the students," as presidents Julius Glickman and Greg Lipscomb were so skilled in doing, through open, informal forums with the student body president or the elected representatives; another method might be to have a "speakers' bureau" which would give to other student organizations presentations designed to inform their members of student government's purpose and activities, to seek their input, and possibly even to interest them in volunteering for committee work or running for office.

Bridging the gap between students and the Students' Association will also be facilitated if student leaders will (3) cultivate a cooperative working relationship with The Daily Texan. At the very least, the Texan editor should be persuaded to provide space for a weekly "President's Gavel"

or "Senators Speak" column, as was the policy in the 1960s. But a truly excellent relationship with the Texan could be an invaluable asset, in that the paper can help to promote a favorable image of student government: Michael Eakin, 1973-74 Texan editor (and Sandy Kress' roommate) undoubtedly provided major assistance to Kress' ambitious programs by supporting them in the press. Similarly, 1982-83 editor Lisa Beyer deserves great credit for aiding the Association's rebirth by making "student government's issues also the Texan's issues and the average student's issues."<sup>6</sup> The Students' Association should take any steps necessary to prevent the development of an antagonistic relationship with the student newspaper, for they both should be fighting on the same side.

Several former Students' Association presidents highlighted the need to (4) develop an open relationship, based on mutual respect, with the campus administration as well. The late 1970s image of the Association probably still persists with many administrators, who remember it as an unrepresentative, immature, disrespectful debating club. It is the responsibility of today's student leaders to prove these administrators wrong. And, as disagreeable as students may find this prospect, this task will, at least for the present, require students to play by the administration's rules: to the extent that President Peter Flawn indeed runs the University like a corporation, as Paul Begala has so often charged,<sup>7</sup> student leaders must adopt a co-managerial "team player" attitude. Historically, student proposals that were well thought out, researched, documented and planned have enjoyed great administrative acceptance--the shuttle bus

system is but one of many examples--and this approach should be preferred today over confrontational politics that force the administration and students into adversary roles. 1948-49 student body president Barefoot Sanders concurs:

I think . . . the students today in turn aren't going to have access [to the administration] unless they feel like you're going to come with requests that there are reasons behind; you're not going to come and say, "Let's tear down the Main Building tomorrow; how 'bout it?"<sup>8</sup>

Student leaders can regain the administrative respect that was lost in the Seventies by dealing with campus policy-makers in a rational, mature, and responsible fashion: these were the very qualities that made the Senior Cabinet more palatable to the administration than was student government some eleven years ago. Only when that respect is re-established will the Association leaders be seen as the representatives of the student body; and only then will they regularly be included, as Mitch Kreindler correctly desires,<sup>9</sup> in the information flow of the UT bureaucracy. The administration, on the other hand, should be urged to recognize that the students' short lifetime on campus breeds potentially dangerous frustration when their proposals are stalled interminably at lower decision-making levels: the top administrators should therefore make every possible effort to accept student input directly and consider it with the same degree of seriousness with which it is presented. Regardless of the administration's decisions, however, students should not resort to public criticism of the administration and circum-

vention of its authority--at least, not during the next few years--as such actions carry with them the weighty risk of retaliatory moves that the Students' Association in its current, tenuous second infancy, could in all likelihood not withstand.

Virtually all of the former student presidents agree that in these early, rebuilding years, the Students' Association must strive to (5) keep student government relevant to the campus. This is not to say that the Association should cease its off-campus-related activities; however, those activities should be limited to issues that directly affect the students. Lobbying the Legislature to prevent a tuition increase would be a legitimate activity, for example, while passing resolutions condemning apartheid policies in South Africa would not. Some student leaders will disagree with this recommendation; but a careful examination of the Association's poor track record in dividing its attention between campus and non-campus issues suggests that, at present, it is sound advice. In the late '60s, when students wanted their student government to deal with broad political and social issues, its energies were focused instead on campus-related matters, as we observed in Chapter 7. By the time student government did begin to address these issues in the early '70s, students were already becoming more academic- and career-oriented, as they still are in general today.

Lowell Lebermann, who has remained in contact with the student body since his 1962 presidency, corroborates

this evaluation as he advocates an emphasis on campus-related issues:

I see a big, expanded, and exciting role for student government if it moves in that direction instead of into expending its energies into the broader community through partisan politics and national kinds of issues that the students, as a whole, I think, don't want to be being messed with as far as their student government is concerned. They read the paper; they can make up their own minds; they can be Democrats or Republicans or Independents--they can do all those kinds of things, and I think that if student government will pay attention to student government's affairs, that it will be a very viable entity and will be taken seriously by the administration and the Board of Regents and can go forward in a meaningful kind of way.<sup>10</sup>

Student government could broaden its on-campus scope even further if it can (6) integrate Senior Cabinet with the Students' Association. The current division of responsibility between these two groups, with the Cabinet devoted to academic affairs and the Association in charge of other student matters, is rather artificial and dated. Senior Cabinet plays a critical role in coordinating the academic programming of the college councils; it should not be abolished, as some have suggested, simply because student government has returned to the campus. However, if the two organizations could somehow be combined--perhaps with Senior Cabinet brought under the Association as an Educational Policy and Programming Committee, with, say, two senators appointed to the group to facilitate liaison with the Association--the Cabinet would benefit from the vast resource pool of the Association, and student government would gain increased power, influence, and prestige. Furthermore, the unification of the two



bodies would help to eliminate any possible potential for power or jurisdictional struggles in the future--although, to the credit of student president Paul Begala and 1982-83 Senior Cabinet Chairwoman Julie Tindall, these problems did not arise during the first months of student government's new existence (much to the disappointment of some skeptics).

Finally, we come to the greatest challenge facing student government today at the University of Texas and, for that matter, at every other college and university in the nation. In order to realize its maximum potential effectiveness, the Students' Association must take positive steps to (7) evolve a sense of continuity from year to year.

Sydney Reagan, 1939-40 Texas student body president and later active in the student and faculty governance processes at Southern Methodist University, explains the inherent continuity problem:

The thing about student government is that you have a complete turnover every four years; and what happened five years ago is ancient history, unknown to the present student body. They have no sense of history . . . I don't know quite how to accomplish this (if I did, I'd be a genius), but if there is some way that the students can know that the University didn't begin on the day of their arrival, and that it didn't end the day they left, then we'll have better student governments.<sup>11</sup>

Each new student administration has a tendency to "develop a new horse to ride"<sup>12</sup>--to introduce new, innovative projects, frequently at the expense of ongoing programs. In addition, once a program is over four years old, there are very few students still in school who remember its original purpose; all too often, these ideas are scrapped rather than

overhauled or improved. This was probably the fate of such valuable enterprises as "Inquiry," the Challenge Colloquium, "Food for Thought," "Meet the President," the student health insurance program, and many, many others. All of these programs could have remained viable and useful, if only the Students' Association had kept them up to date by a process of continual modification as necessary, year after year. A glance at the history of the UT Students' Association will reveal remarkably few ongoing concerns that received this degree of careful attention--but those that did, such as "Steer Here" and Stump Speaking, enjoyed long fruitful lives. Into which category will today's Students United for Rape Elimination fall? Will it continue to grow and provide its valuable walking escort service in the future? Or, after Paul Begala, its founder, and the first SURE committee chairperson, Student Senator Meg Brooks, have graduated and left the campus, will it be allowed to wither and die? These are questions that future student leaders must ask.

Continuity from administration to administration is even more critical for projects that require over a single year to initiate. Lasting achievements such as the Student Health Center, the Shuttle Bus system, and the Offices of the Students' Attorney and the University Ombudsman were not brought into existence overnight; they required several consecutive years of concerted, dedicated, and often thankless effort on the part of Students' Association personnel. But these successes are rare. Too many student leaders still

cling to the notion that every project must be completed during their term, for the student government ceases to exist on their last day in office; there are far too few who are willing to sow a seed, or tend the seedlings planted by their predecessors, while knowing full well that they will never have the opportunity themselves to sit in the shade of the full-grown tree. For the Student's Association truly to accomplish great, enduring things, student leaders must view their terms as parts of a broader, continuous process and be willing to sacrifice their own egos for long-term goals. Only then will the full potential of student government be realized.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thus, our study comes to a close. We have looked broadly at the institution of student government as it has developed and exists today across the nation, and we have surveyed the last 50 years of the student government experience at the University of Texas at Austin. We have seen the Students' Association grow from a body that administered all-campus dances and selected University Sweethearts into an active, vital organization involved in all phases of student life, both on and off-campus. We have seen it beset by controversy, abolished by the students it purported to represent, and then brought back to life only a few years later. But what lies ahead? The Students' Association is today entering a critical interval in its reestablishment on campus: the first, short, four-month term was a sort of grace

period granted by the students and the press; it was a time to set up a governing structure, to get organized.

Now, the weight rests on Association President Mitch Kreindler's shoulders. In the coming year, students will begin to say, "O.K., student government; so you're back. Show us what you can do. Prove yourself." The prognosis for the Students' Association will be written this year, and it will not necessarily be a clean bill of health: there are many traps and pitfalls yet to be avoided, a few of which we have seen here. But if the student government can generate immediate, visible results, projects that students can point to and say "My Students' Association does that for me"; if it can avoid internal squabbling and "paper-pushing" at all costs; and if it is realistic in its promises to the students so that disillusionment is avoided--if it can hurdle all of these barriers--then students may once again consider the Students' Association their own, and may look back on it with pride in years to come.

## CHAPTER 10

Notes

- <sup>1</sup>Interview with Sandy Kress, January 3, 1983, p. 13.
- <sup>2</sup>Interview with Lowell Lebermann, February 23, 1983,  
p. 9.
- <sup>3</sup>Interview with Frank Fleming, March 19, 1983, pp.  
13, 15.
- <sup>4</sup>Interview with Mitch Kreindler, April 5, 1983, p. 8.
- <sup>5</sup>Interview with Paul Begala, April 5, 1983, p. 13.
- <sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 11.
- <sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 9.
- <sup>8</sup>Interview with Barefoot Sanders, February 11, 1983,  
p. 5.
- <sup>9</sup>Kreindler, p. 6.
- <sup>10</sup>Lebermann, p. 10.
- <sup>11</sup>Interview with Sydney Reagan, February 12, 1983, p. 5.
- <sup>12</sup>Ibid.

PART IV:  
THE INTERVIEWS

## ALLAN SHIVERS

February 9, 1983

*The 1932-1933 term of Allan Shivers as president of the UT Students' Association is the first year covered in this history. Shivers has maintained a continuously close contact with the University ever since then, while serving as a State Senator and later as Lieutenant Governor and Governor of Texas. He went on to be appointed to the University System Board of Regents, holding this post for six years, including four as chairman. Today, Governor Shivers is Senior Chairman of the Board of Austin National Bank.*

DSG: What kind of organization did you use in your executive branch? What kind of powers did you have?

SHIVERS: Well, of course you had the council [Assembly] members from each school, and the president as such was more like a chairman of the board. The majority vote of the Council really determined what action was going to be had, although I think the President of the Students' Association had to act in a position of leadership, trying to determine the direction that he thought was best to be taken.

DSG: Did you feel like you had a lot of impact on that direction?

SHIVERS: I think so; at least we had wonderful cooperation. The Student Union was organized during the time that I was president, and I appointed the first Board [of Directors] of the Student Union; we put it in operation at that time, and I think that was a great accomplishment. Of course, the Union has had its controversies, but by and large, it has served a very fine purpose....

DSG: Who directed the Union prior to the time that you actually installed the Union system?

SHIVERS: Well, see, the Union was created at that time. The building itself was finished and started in operation, and I appointed the first Board. That was during my term as president...a contract had been let for the building prior to that, but the building was finished and started in operation during that time, and I appointed the first Board, a chairman and four members, I believe.

DSG: Were the members of the Board students or faculty?

SHIVERS: No, they were all students.

DSG: Was there any faculty supervision of that?

SHIVERS: There was a faculty...I guess you'd call him a consultant, or an advisor, but the students actually ran the Student Union, in the beginning. I'm sure that the Dean's office probably had a lot of power of direction, but the students basically had the responsibility of ac-

tually operating it and being in control.

DSG: During your term, you were operating under a Students' Association Constitution--did you make any major changes to that, that you recall; any changes in the governmental structure?

SHIVERS: No, not that I recall. A few years before that, the faculty had called [?] what was still called the Honor Council, but it was really a Judicial Council, and the name was later changed to the Judicial Council.... I held that office prior to being president of the Students' Association.

DSG: You still had the Men's and Women's Honor Councils when you were president?

SHIVERS: No, we still had the name.... A student by the name of Joe Pool, who later went to Congress, succeeded me as chairman of the Council. But it served more as a judiciary council, and the name was later changed to the Judicial Council.

DSG: So there weren't actually two separate councils at the time that you were in office.

SHIVERS: No.... I would say that the establishment of the Student Union was certainly our greatest accomplishment. I don't recall anything else of any consequence.

DSG: Was the funding for the Students' Association sufficient? I read that you got five cents out of every \$10.50 blanket tax that was purchased, but I didn't find out exactly how many were purchased, so I don't know exactly how much you had in your budget--but was it enough?

SHIVERS: Well, you could say it was enough; we made out on it. We could have spent more, but I don't know that we really ever needed any more. We never did ask for any more.

DSG: How would you evaluate the degree of student participation in the government? For instance, were students more interested in carrying on the machinery of self-government, or were some of them more interested in other things--promoting their group, etc.? According to the Texan, there was a big fraternity-independent type of rivalry at the time. What do you think were the real motivations of the people who participated in the governing process?

SHIVERS: Well, at that particular time participation in student government was looked upon with some degree of respect. There wasn't any controversy, as there has been in recent years, as to whether or not you were going to have a student government, nor were there a lot of students saying we don't need one. The question of whether you needed a student government or not, as far as I recall, was never raised; it was just accepted as a matter of fact, and the members of



the Assembly, and particularly the President, represented the student body on whatever occasions required student participation. The president of the Students' Association was also a member of the Student Publications Board, a member of the Student Athletic Council, and represented the student body on any campus-wide organization.

DSG: In your fall election for the Student Assembly, you had 23 positions open, and you had 69 people file for those 23 positions--three times the number of positions, which is phenomenal compared to what we have today.... You also had record voter turnouts...would you say that, judging on those kinds of indicators, that the Students' Association was a good representation of the student body at large--were they well represented?

SHIVERS: Yes, I think so; also during that time, you'll find a great competition in the various departments as for [Assembly] members from the business school, the law school...it wasn't as if you had to go out and beg people to run--we always had plenty of candidates; plenty of people who wanted to serve and considered it an honor.

DSG: During your tenure as president, how would you describe the Students' Association's relationship with the Board of Regents? Did you have any dealings with the Board of Regents, and if so, what kind of grounds were you on?

SHIVERS: We actually had very little association with the Board of Regents, but I was invited as President to attend a Regents meeting as a representative of the student body. If anything came up, I was allowed to present the student viewpoint on the question.

DSG: Was that on their initiative, or did the students petition the regents to allow you to sit in on their meetings?

SHIVERS: I think it came about as sort of a mutual agreement....

DSG: Did that continue on after you were president, or was that a one-time type thing?

SHIVERS: I don't know how long it continued, but when I became Chairman of the Board of Regents I reinstituted that and invited not only the student officers of UT Austin, but also of the other schools, and most of the presidents of the other schools in the University System brought their [student body] presidents or vice-presidents to the meetings of the Board of Regents. I gave them an opportunity to make a statement, if they had anything they wanted to say; this created, I thought, a pretty good relationship. We made them know that they were welcome.

DSG: When Frank Erwin was chairman, did he pretty much agree with that kind of idea, or was he less receptive to student input on the Board?

SHIVERS: Well, I don't know whether Frank did it or not; when I first

became a member of the Board of Regents they had a rule that any student or faculty member who wanted to appear before the Board of Regents had to file with the secretary of the Board four days or something like that in advance. I cut that out. They could just come and make an appearance, and I'd always ask them if they had anything they wanted to say. Very few of them did.

DSG: What about with the UT Austin administration--how would you describe the Students' Association's relationship, 1932-33, with the administration?

SHIVERS: I think on the whole it was good. Compared to now, of course, you had a very small student body.... I think the relationship with the University administration was good; I don't recall anything that was not good.

DSG: Take the same question of relationship, with the faculty and staff--any relationship that you had there. Were there any students on University boards or committees at that time--student representatives besides those on the Athletic Council?

SHIVERS: I don't think so; not that I recall. There could have been, but I don't recall any. I would think that possibly on certain types of committees, students were asked to serve; but offhand I don't recall any that were. Students at that time, if they wanted it, could have almost daily contact with the members of the faculty.

DSG: That was pretty much invited?

SHIVERS: Oh, yes.

DSG: Did the Students' Association have any kind of power in appointments, academic or administrative, say as far as deans or other officials go--were students consulted, or did you try to have any input on that, or was it understood that students would stay out of that kind of business?

SHIVERS: I don't recall that the students participated in that at all. Not at that time. At the present time, as you know, when they select a new dean, student representation is always appointed by the president of the University...students are selected to participate in the selection process.

DSG: At the time that you were president, and actually for some time afterwards, the Students' Association controlled the allocation of the Blanket Tax to the various groups--you were allocating, I think, among about eight different groups--how important would you say that power was to the overall power of the Students' Association?

SHIVERS: Well, of course it was very important; you divided up the proceeds according to need, and I'm sure, although I don't recall any specific instances, that a lot of them complained that they weren't

getting enough of the fee. In a situation of that kind, no one ever has all the money that they would want.... I don't remember any specific complaints, but I'm sure there were some.

DSG: You mentioned the installation of the Union system before; you said that was probably your biggest accomplishment as far as campus-related issues for your administration. There were also some items in the Association records about an investigation of the University Co-Op--there was a resolution introduced, and it was passed and a committee was appointed, I believe consisting of yourself, a member of the faculty, two Assemblymen and two students to be selected at-large to engage an auditor and, with him, "to make a thorough investigation of the policies of the Co-Op, and pay particular regard to the sale and purchase price of new and used books." This was in March of 1933, and it seemed to die after that. Did anything ever come of that? Was the investigation ever held?

SHIVERS: I don't even recall that one was asked for, to tell you the truth. I'm not surprised, because...it seems to me that I can remember that there's been an investigation of the student Co-Op almost every year, for one reason or another.

DSG: There was a big one during Sydney Reagan's term, I believe 1939-1940....

SHIVERS: Well, I don't remember the one you're speaking of as coming in March of '33, but I'm sure they conducted an investigation and made a report; whatever happened to it, I have no idea.

DSG: OK, let's turn to off-campus affairs. You said to a Daily Texan reporter, "It is not the duty of the Assembly to dabble in state governmental affairs." What had happened was in a February meeting, it came out that a student had misrepresented himself as a representative of the Assembly on the issue of out-of-state tuition fees. He was lobbying the Legislature, and the committee apparently was somewhat antagonized by him, and this came up in debate, and a resolution was passed saying that nobody should lobby the Legislature until further notice.... Was the Students' Association involved in any kind of activities off-campus?

SHIVERS: No.

DSG: So it was strictly campus-related type issues?

SHIVERS: I don't recall that interview with the Texan reporter; I probably said that, I mean I'm sure it's accurate. But at that time the feeling was that the regents and the administration of the University ought to handle affairs of the University, not the students; and that the students were not sufficiently acquainted with University problems, therefore that those problems ought to be handled by officials of the University, and the regents.

DSG: Do you think that still applies?

SHIVERS: Well, the complete picture has changed since that time. Now, the students have a committee on political activities...and over the years, I think the attitude of the Legislature has changed also. Now you have a lot of members of the Legislature who are glad to hear from the students.

DSG: Of course the students control a lot of votes, too.

SHIVERS: To some extent, yes, particularly in this area; most of them vote here; they don't vote back home. I think that if they request permission to attend, that most committees would allow them to make their presentation.

DSG: We talked just a second ago about your relationship with the administration and the Board of Regents, and so forth; I'm going to ask you a similar question, but ask you to look at it from the opposite point of view: put yourself in the shoes of first, just the average student-on-the-street--the one who's not involved in student government. From his point of view, did he see the Students' Association as his official "voice," the voice of the student body?

SHIVERS: I think so. An indication of that is the strong participation among the students in student government at that time. I think you have to deduct from that that the so-called average student felt that the Students' Association did speak for the student body.

DSG: Take the same question from the point of view of the administration--did President Benedict and the administration see the Students' Association as the official "voice" of the students? Did they pretty much assume that if the Students' Association said "the students want this," that that was really the case?

SHIVERS: I think so.

DSG: There was an issue that came up about opening the tennis courts on Sunday--do you remember that one?

SHIVERS: Uh, no; no, I don't.

DSG: Some students had come to a representative, and asked him to introduce a resolution in the Assembly, that the tennis courts be opened for use on Sunday.... You sent this resolution on the President, saying this was the desire of the great majority of the student body, and he wrote back [with his objections]; he said he would consider the issue, but it didn't sound like he was going to consider it too strongly--it sounded like it died right there. Was that typical, or more of an atypical type situation?

SHIVERS: Well, I don't remember that occasion at all, but I would say it was probably typical. Benedict, in my opinion, was one of the best

presidents the University's ever had. His major point there was that a decision in favor of this would cause a lot of criticism from the churches around the campus. He's just adding, in my opinion, the library, the gymnasium and so forth as window dressing.

DSG: Towards the very end of your term, during the spring elections for the new president, the Daily Texan editor, the Cactus editor, and so forth, there was a big controversy over a recount. There were three or four races that were extremely close--there was a turnout of about 4,500 people, and out of that there were three or four races where two candidates were within ten votes of each other. Do you recall that?

SHIVERS: Yes.

DSG: Apparently the day after the [election], the editor wrote a front-page editorial in the Texan, criticizing the counting process, criticizing you and Joe Pool and your election judge for not allowing a recount. They said that there were various improprieties...none of it was substantiated, and they asked for you to explain your position. This was the letter that you wrote back the next day in the "Firing Line" [I handed him a copy]....

SHIVERS: Sure was long-winded, wasn't it?

DSG: ...and then the following day there was a whole page of letters both supporting you and condemning you....

SHIVERS: Well, the editor of the Texan was on one side, and we were on the other, and that's the reason for the controversy.

DSG: You were supporting two different candidates, you mean?

SHIVERS: Yes, yes; they were supporting Hornaday and I was supporting Hardeman. As I recall, the Dean ordered a recount....

DSG: They petitioned the Dean under a section of the Constitution that says that in a case of grave emergency he can overrule the Constitution.

SHIVERS: Hornaday won out, and there was still a very small difference.

DSG: It was 46 votes.

SHIVERS: And Hornaday was a good friend of mine; still is.... It wasn't anything about being on a different side from the editor of the Texan.

DSG: Was the refusal to order a recount based on the fact that you were supporting Hardeman, or was it that you really did not feel that there had been any errors in the counting?

SHIVERS: No, I felt at that time, and I'm sure Mr. Pool did too, that it had been a fair election and a fair count, so we wouldn't have ac-

complished anything by [having a recount].

.....  
Anyway, it was just another argument.

DSG: And you were friends afterwards?

SHIVERS: Oh, yeah; and we're still friends today.

.....  
DSG: Let's turn now to your term on the Board of Regents. You were on the Board from January '73 to January '79; that would put you on there during the administrations of Sandy Kress, Frank Fleming, Carol Crabtree, Jay Adkins, and Judy Spalding, and then student government was abolished in 1978. What was your general feeling for student government during that time--did it change any?

SHIVERS: Well, it was evident that student government was losing interest of the students. I don't know whether it was because of the very large increase in the number of students, or what caused it, but they were beginning to lose interest. It was quite evident. I think Sandy Kress made an excellent president; I know Carol Crabtree was a good president. The young man that was in between them...

DSG: Frank Fleming...

SHIVERS: ...Yes, he was good. And then those two clowns came along and made a complete mockery; very similar to the election held just recently when they elected a comic strip character as the first president.

DSG: Did they ever appear before the Board of Regents?

SHIVERS: Oh, yes, yes, yes! I called a special meeting over in the auditorium of the Harry Ransom Center (the Humanities Research Center) one evening, and invited all student leaders to come, particularly the elected ones, and they all came. And so I called on this Jay Adkins and Skip Slyfield; they made the same speech over there that they made getting elected: "Plow up the West Mall and plant cabbage!" They were never serious about anything; they clowned through it all. They later fell out personally.... I don't know whether it was out of jealousy, or what caused it. But that was the end of student government, and then the students themselves finally voted that they did not want student government, and the Regents of course agreed with that.

DSG: Why do you think that was [that students decided to abolish it]?

SHIVERS: I think the students, and everyone else, just got sick and tired of listening to a lot of tomfoolery that didn't have anything to do with student government; they were making a mockery of it.

DSG: Was that just Adkins and Slyfield, or do you think it started before that?

SHIVERS: I think before that it was gradually increasing in lack of interest, climaxed by the Adkins and Slyfield election. Their election, their campaign, made a mockery of student government. The Regents were led to adopt the students' viewpoint; they couldn't see any need for student government. There were still a lot of students who were serious about having a student government. I personally, of course, having had the connection that I've had with it, I'd like to see an effective student government...you have to assume that [a student] that is elected by the college or school will speak for the majority of students from that particular school. I think they can render a very fine service by doing that. They can be helpful to the administration. The group that you have now, called Senior Cabinet--they impressed me very much as serious students who do represent the viewpoint of their school. Most of them that I was associated with while I was on the Board of Regents were serious-minded students who did, I think, have the support not only of the students in their school, but also of the faculty and the dean of the department.

DSG: Do you know of any attempts, conscious or unconscious, that were made by either the administration or the Regents, to weaken the student government? Probably this would precede your term on the Board of Regents; this would be during Frank Erwin's reign.

SHIVERS: Oh, no, I don't think the Board of Regents did anything like that at all. I think the students killed student government.

DSG: Was there ever a feeling, say in the late '60s or early '70s, when people like Jeff Jones were president, that students were getting a little too powerful?

SHIVERS: No; during those days, of course, there was a lot of student uprising--marches, groups of various sorts creating disturbances--and naturally those kinds of things would not be popular with either the regents or the majority of the faculty, although I'm sure they were supported by some of the faculty; but basically they would not have support. That was an era that wasn't good for the school; it wasn't good for the students or the faculty; it wasn't good for the State.

.....  
DSG: Let me ask you about what may or may not be kind of a sensitive issue, and that was the controversy over the appointment of Lorene Rogers from ad interim president to the permanent presidency. This has been discussed at length in a lot of the literature; in fact, some of the very few books that have been written about student government in the '70s, nationwide, single out this particular instance as an example of the "failing student government at Austin," and so forth. I'm not trying to put you on the spot, but I'm trying to get as many viewpoints on this as I can. There was a Student-Faculty Advisory Committee..., that was set up to interview possible appointees and submit a list of five to the Board....

SHIVERS: Yes, they had about fifteen members, and they interviewed candidates. And then they had the Regents' committee, which under the

rules had the...well, the first committee had the power to recommend, but the Regents' committee had the power to select.

DSG: Why was it that Lorene Rogers was selected when she was not on the list?

SHIVERS: Well, she was the only one that received a majority of the votes on the Regents' committee.

DSG: Why did the Regents feel that they ought to appoint her?

SHIVERS: Because she was the best one to fill the post.

DSG: The students charged, and the faculty charged also, that student/faculty input had been ignored....

SHIVERS: They weren't ignored; they were listened to for three or four months. We had joint meetings over two or three weeks.

DSG: And their recommendations were taken into consideration?

SHIVERS: Oh yes; they were considered very seriously.

DSG: Do you think that the controversy that erupted afterwards contributed to the eventual decline and fall of the student government?

SHIVERS: I don't think it had anything to do at all with the decline of student government; I don't think student government was affected by it.

DSG: Sandy Kress speculated that it was one more disappointment in a long series of disappointments...he pointed out that it's not realistic to expect that students would be that effective [in changing the mind of the Board].

SHIVERS: There were students on the Regents' committee--Janie Strauss, and the young man who was vice-president...

DSG: Under who...under Carol Crabtree--Lyn Breeland...

SHIVERS: I believe that's right. But he and Janie Strauss were students on the Regents' committee. That did cause a great controversy with a certain number of students and faculty, but I don't think a majority of either.

DSG: And you don't think the student sentiment contributed to their increasing disenchantment with the student government?

SHIVERS: No, not at all. It had nothing to do with it.

DSG: Then to kind of wrap it up, we could get back to what we were talking about before I turned the tape recorder on, and that was, what's



ahead? What prospects do you see for the new Students' Association? They've been in office now for about four months; they're just beginning. What do you think lies ahead?

SHIVERS: Well, I think that really depends on how well they handle the duties of their office, and how much they participate, what kind of participation they have, and how much interest they can create among other students. The student government is and should be a voice of the student body.

DSG: Do you think it's a feasible exercise on a campus of almost 50,000 people?

SHIVERS: I think so...

DSG: Can a body of sixty students or so represent 50,000 people?

SHIVERS: Yes, I think definitely that they can. Take the City of Austin; it has a city commission about the same size as your student council, and they represent four times the people.

DSG: And yet you have somewhat voter turnout, voter participation in the City of Austin....

SHIVERS: Yes, that's what I mean. If student government is going to exist and be effective, it's going to have to create an interest in a majority of the students, and get participation by them, and represent them on not so-called "hell-raising" programs, but on logical steps of improving activities on the campus, and improving relationships between faculty and students, between the administration and the students--but do it in a businesslike manner, not by trying to criticize the people who are involved.

DSG: Do you think it's best that their emphasis lie on-campus rather than off-campus for the time being?

SHIVERS: Yes.

DSG: If you had to sit down with our new president and give him a single specific suggestion for how to best make the thing work, what would you tell him?

SHIVERS: I'd tell him to visit with the administration, the president and the vice-presidents, the deans, and with the students who are active but not members of the [Assembly], and to try to create goodwill with all of those people, and convince them that the student government really wants to act as a responsible, as well as responsive, arm of the University.

**JENKINS GARRETT****February 5, 1983**

*Jenkins Garrett was Students' Association President 1935-1936, and held a seat on the University Board of Regents from 1969 to 1975. He is today a senior partner in the Ft. Worth law firm of Garrett and Stahala. Fortunately, he was able to meet with me while he was in Austin for the opening ceremonies of the Centennial celebration; after lunch at the Hyatt Regency hotel, we returned to his room for the interview.*

DSG: This may be rather hard for you to remember, but how did you organize your administrative branch? Did you have a series of committees, or anything like that?

GARRETT: No, it was pretty much around the elected officials...the secretary...the vice-president; then, of course, we did appoint various committees. The president's office could at that time have been a full time job, but you've got to remember there were only 7,500 students and too, life was probably a little simpler then--we didn't have many of the issues that students and student government in recent years have been picking up. The president did not receive compensation at that time....

DSG: I was reading an editorial in the Texan saying we ought to give the president more to do, and give him a salary. It said, "he already earns one, he should be receiving one."

GARRETT: Well, there was much resistance to that, and I was one of them on the basis that I thought that service ought to be on the basis of serving the student body, as distinguished from making it a salaried position. You've got to remember also that at that time, we were in the depths of a Depression, and the feeling was that if you paid a salary to the student body president, the people would be running for it for the salary as distinguished from to serve.

DSG: What about funding, both for the machinery of the Students' Association itself, and with regard to control of the Blanket Tax, which came to about \$43,000 your year?  
cents out of each \$10.50 blanket tax that the students bought.

GARRETT: My recollection was that it was really not too much of a problem. I remember meeting with the Dean of Student Life, "Shorty" Nowotny, and working out the division of the Blanket Tax. Of course, the Athletics Department had a representative, student government had a representative; I don't remember any particular problems with respect to division of the funds.

DSG: So the apportionment wasn't really carried out within the student government per se, but the Association had a representative on

the committee. Were you the representative?

GARRETT: Yes, as I recall, I was the representative. Of course, each group always wanted a little more--a larger proportion--but probably one thing that helped the student body at that time campus-wise was the Students' Association; it was probably a little more popular than the football team was. But I don't recall any problems in that area; and you've got to remember, too, that our requirements for dollars were rather minimal, because only the secretary was paid.... As I recall, we worked very closely with the Student Union and they would help us with mailings from time to time. I just don't remember us being short of money, or money being a problem.

DSG: How important to that importance of the Students' Association was that ability to allocate the Blanket Tax?

GARRETT: Well, at that time, it was still subject to administrative and regental approval; but I do not remember there being any problems so far as I know. Our participation was advisory, the same as the Athletic Council was advisory; all the participants were advisory, but the administration had final authority....

DSG: Was it pretty much where you arrived at a figure first which everybody agreed on, or was it where you each submitted your individual requests and then the administration took it from there?

GARRETT: My memory's a little dim, but my recollection is that we pretty well had a recommendation that was unanimous to the administration. The differences must not have been acute, because I have no recollection of there being any particular push-and-pull. Of course, as far as student government was concerned, our portion was rather small because our needs were small as far as dollars were concerned. Most of our activities did not require dollars.

DSG: How would you evaluate, as the president, the degree of student participation in their government? Were they interested primarily in self-government, or in other benefits from participation?

GARRETT: Well, I think you have to look at the background of the time of 1936. Most of the students there were usually there at great sacrifice on the part of their parents or the students themselves. At that particular time, practically every job that could be filled by students--whether it be waiters, or cleaning up, or extra work in the controller's office or the registrar's office, or whatever--students were employed. I don't know the exact percentage, but the great majority of students at that time worked part of their way through, and many of them all the way through...and I think the general attitude at that time was, "I've come to the University here to get an education," and you didn't have so much an attitude of questioning "What are student rights?" It was more a matter of "I want an education, and I want out as soon as I can." But, the campus was the center of student activities, and as of that time I think as far as student life was

concerned, it was managed pretty much by the students. For example, we had the Student Union, we had a Student Union committee, the majority of which was students. They ran the Germans and the activities of the Union; as far as student activities were concerned, the students dominated it, and I felt no pressure from the administration.

Maybe the reason for that was the school being very small. Bill McGill, who was Assistant to the President, which I guess now would be called Public Relations or Student Relations man, and "Shorty" Nowotny, who was the Assistant Dean of Men, they were graduates of the University of Texas; they had organized the Friars Society, the Cowboys, and remained on the campus; and the relationship between those men and the student body and the student leaders at that time was so close that it eliminated a lot of the failure of communication that may have arisen since that time. Of course there's a lot of difference between 7,500 students on the campus and 46,000, it's true; and people knew each other better. I don't recall anything other than helpfulness in all of the programs that I tried to initiate while I was president. But our emphasis was on the campus, and campus problems.

DSG: Did students see that as benefitting them? I mean, did the students who were active in the Students' Association, in the governance process, were they doing it with a sense of trying to help their fellow students and trying to get the most out of their education, or were they in it, say, more for prestige...what we would today call "resume-padders"? The reason I ask is this--the Texan said in an editorial in March of 1936 that many of those who actively participate in student government have utilized it largely as a means of advancing their own popularity or prestige of their group. And a lot of coverage also seemed to be given to the fraternity-independent rivalry within the Association, particularly between you and [Vice-President] Harvey Pulliam. Was that really a major factor--were people in it to promote the interests of their respective groups, whether they be fraternities or something else?

GARRETT: Well, I don't recall that being the primary motive; I don't know the motives of other people, but the Texan, in my opinion, has never been a very accurate reflection of student opinion, then or now. Naturally, when appointments come, people know best folks in their own organization, and I think that various organizations did take pride in their members being active in the student government and student politics; but I think that was a secondary thing rather than a primary one. For example, when I ran for president there was a group that we got together that was a coalition between the fraternities and the non-fraternities and the dormitories...we had a card index set up for each dormitory and boarding house and sorority. Of course, the big push and pull as between groups centered on the Cactus, as to which girls were named the Bluebonnet Belles, and who were the Beauties...that was very important to the sororities. I think the sororities at that time did give thought to who might win the Cactus editorship so that they would have ins with that particular editor.

DSG: Well, as a for instance, the Co-Op Board appointments in March

of 1936...this is again Texan coverage, so it may or may not be accurate...the article said...that in the end, it came down to Jenkins Garrett's fraternity faction, and they charged that you had met as a caucus before the meeting..., versus Vice-President Pulliam's anti-clique group. Did you ever get a feeling that that was the thrust of the rivalry, or was it not painted accurately by the Texan?

GARRETT: Well, I don't subscribe to that being correct; but let me say this: when you go through a political fight, and you win, you put your friends, and those who supported you, and those who have your same viewpoints, on the committees. Of course, I was a member of Tejas Club, and back at that time, we were very adamant that we were not a fraternity. You did not get elected by being just a fraternity man, because the fraternity group was always a minority group on the campus, and you had to have support to be elected of the dormitories, the boarding houses; if you look at my appointments, they represented groups that supported me. And that's the facts of life today; you can have the Washington Post criticizing Reagan because he put his cohorts on the committees--well, sure he did! So did Kennedy, so did Roosevelt, and I think actually in the 1930's period--Shivers, and myself, and Connally, and Jake Pickle and those were presidential candidates, our political campaigns were rather akin to those on the outside. We had meetings of our supporters in the dormitories and fraternities, and you went after bloc votes; and naturally when it came to appointments, you would appoint those people who were helpful to you in that campaign. I don't particularly remember any meetings ahead of time, but I always...tried to make the appointments as broad-gauged as I possibly could, and representative of the overall campus as distinguished from one of the groups. And anytime somebody gets elected, they become a clique; you never hear of those not elected as being a clique.

DSG: Voter turnout in the election for the president and the Cactus editor, Texan editor, and so forth--probably the most high stimulus election of the year--you had about 4,500 people turn out to vote, out of a population of approximately 7,000--a pretty high percentage. Was that also an offshoot of the fact that students were really interested in getting the maximum out of their education? What I'm getting at is this: did they feel that the Students' Association was representative of them?

GARRETT: Well, I think the Students' Association and student activities were looked upon as part of their training and part of their education; I don't think there's a conflict between getting educated and participating. At that time, the engineers, as a group, took practically no interest in politics, and the law school looked upon themselves as being senior citizens not interested in the things there up on "the Hill," as they called it. But if you eliminated the engineers and the lawyers, the percentage of students that voted was very high, and I think that's evidence that they felt they were having a part in the direction of student government and the life on the campus. When people feel like they're not a part, and they're not listened to, then they stop voting. I think that the fact that such a large percentage voted was because

they felt they had a vested interest in the direction of the student government.

DSG: Let me read you a part of an editorial by Paul Crume, who as we know, also went on to bigger and better things. This was written in 1935 just prior to the fall elections, and he says: "Most students do not regard it (the Students' Association) as a democratic government. No government was ever democratic that was supervised from the top. Perhaps it is just as well that the Assembly is controlled by those who handle the affairs so much more ably." How would you evaluate that; what did he mean?

GARRETT: I really don't know what he had in mind. I had a very close relationship with the administration; I respected Dr. Benedict; Bill McGill and Shorty Nowotny were visible at most every student activity, not as supervisors, but as participants. We never had a Cowboy meeting that Nowotny and Bill McGill weren't there, with their orange shirts on; they were just students that never grew up. But I don't think anyone looked upon them as supervising what any of these organizations did. The student body was called on from time to time by the administration to help out on things; for example, in the [Texas Memorial] Museum drive for funds, we had a very active student committee that wrote the parents and various individuals.... At one time, I was invited, I assume because I was president of the Association, to appear before Legislative committees on behalf of the University administration's desire to have the method of writing the appropriations bills made up. At that particular time, there was a line in the appropriations bill applying to the University for each item: each professor, each activity, was listed separately for so many dollars.... Having a two-year budget setup with a line for each activity was contrary to reality, and the administration, including the regents, were pressing for a lump-sum appropriation, leaving it up to the regents and the administration how much they put in the English department, and how much in the science department. And they asked us to come and testify and be present at the Legislative hearing, and to talk to our representatives and senators.... I talked to them...

DSG: As a representative of the student body?

GARRETT: As a representative of the student body, and interested in the greatness of the University, and to get it out of the control of the Legislature. See, it hadn't been too many years since [Governor "Ma"] Ferguson had killed the entire appropriations bill for the University of Texas because of the "liberals," and so forth. And the effort was successful, and I think that students coming and talking to them on behalf of the University had to have its impact; I know if I were in the House, or in the Senate, and a youngster interested in his university were to come and talk to me in an intelligent and constructive way, I'd listen to him. And I think they listened at that time.

DSG: Did the Board of Regents listen also? What was your relationship

with them?

GARRETT: I never had any relationship as president with the Board of Regents; all of my relationship was with the campus administration.

DSG: So it wasn't like it was, say, in the 70's, where the students would lobby the Board of Regents.

GARRETT: Well, of course, my experience on the Board is that most of that lobbying with the regents was probably more media motivated, because, contrary to what most people believe, the administration of the various schools, whether it be Austin, or Arlington, or San Antonio, or the medical schools, is left up to the various administrations to make recommendations to the regents. Now on the administration, if you say, "We're going to overrule the president, and have second thoughts about their recommendations," so far as routine administration is concerned...they rely on the administration. Now sometimes administrations, if they're not very strong, don't come out and say, "By gosh, this was MY decision, and this is what I'm recommending to the regents, and if the regents don't take my recommendations, if I'm not competent to make those recommendations, then they ought to get another president." I think Peter Flawn is a very excellent example of a fellow that makes his recommendations and would be disappointed if his decisions with respect to administration were not acceptable to the regents.

DSG: Other than the ones you have mentioned, were there any other University-level administrative committees on which students had a seat?

GARRETT: Not that I recall--the Co-Op Board is one...and we were successful, as I recall, in getting a student majority on the Co-Op Board. At least that was our objective. But I don't recall any faculty or administrative committees that we sat on.

DSG: What were the main issues on campus that the Students' Association addressed itself to?

GARRETT: Well, one of the real problems that I felt we had in my administration was, for lack of a better word, school spirit. Other than the Germans, which were our Saturday night dances, there was really nothing to bring the students together much, because at that time the football team and the coach did not have the support of the student body; most of the games we did not even have a pep rally before, and the few that we did, there would just be a handful of people there. I felt that one of the main things that we needed was to do things that would help bring the students, administration, and faculty together. Roosevelt was one of the people I admired very much at that time, and the "Fire-side Forum" was something that was still famous, so we developed what we called then Faculty Forums, where we had committees to get faculty to agree to come and meet with the dormitories and the boarding houses and fraternities, and encourage the different groups to invite them,

primarily for meals, or if not, then right after dinner on certain nights.

And then we established what was called College Night, which we had in Gregory Gymnasium, where all the students came together and all the acts and entertainment were by students; not to go get, you know, Willie Nelson to come and sing, but rather, it was acts and talent of University students.

DSG: Designed to foster a feeling of a spirit of unity within the University.

GARRETT: Yes, a spirit of unity together. The first one we had at Gregory Gym was packed, and I just couldn't believe it.... The thing of having student talent, as distinguished from outside talent, I think helped develop that spirit, and got the students together. And we had a lot of faculty; we invited the faculty to come, and some were there. So, I would say that the Faculty Forums and the College Night were two of the things that we did.

DSG: College Night was held regularly?

GARRETT: It was to be once a year; I don't know whether it was continued or not, but our idea was once a year to have a real big affair.

.....

DSG: OK, let me read something else to you, again out of the Texan. This was an editorial on something that received no news coverage whatsoever; it was a fairly minor incident, but it was an interesting observation, and I wanted to get your thoughts on it. At a special meeting of the Assembly that you had in February, an Assemblyman moved to appoint a committee to report on the advisability of dropping the assessment of negative hours during the flu epidemic [for absences], and the motion died for lack of a second. But when the mover informed the Assembly that a faculty committee had been formed to study the same problem, the motion was re-offered and seconded. There wasn't a quorum at the meeting, so nothing came of it, but here's what the person who wrote the editorial said: "The point is that here was something that looked a little risky. It was something that appeared contrary to the existing order of things run by the officials. But as soon as it was made clear that the officials were themselves considering such a change in cut regulations, student government sighed and said, 'why not?' This incident was a small matter, but it presents insight into something quite big concerning the existence of student government. If it is ever going to utilize its potential power or extend its scope, student government is going to have to do a lot more thinking for itself, and a lot less waiting like sheep for the lead of the higher-ups." It was a pro-student government editorial, intending to say "take more initiative," and so forth.

The point I'm getting at was this: how much initiative did the Students' Association have? Was it ever able to initiate policy decisions on the administration level? What about this business about "thinking for itself" vs. "following the lead of the higher-ups?"



GARRETT: I have no recollection of that particular incident, but you have to remember that the editorship of the Texan was controlled by the group that was opposed to all the other elected officials--the Cactus editor, the president, the [chairman] of the Judiciary Council. The Daily Texan was under the control of the opposition. Now I don't know of anything that we as a student body wanted that we did not have full access to the administration [to get], and they listened to us. Again, I mention the names of Nowotny and McGill; but they were on our side. The students', at that time, interest was only on those things that affected student activities; for example, the establishment of the Faculty Forums, the College Night, and getting the administration to help finance the public address system, and things of that sort that we needed....

DSG: There wasn't any problem with that?

GARRETT: Well, yes; we didn't have any problems, and I don't know what things we should have stood up to the administration on. For example, the Co-Op was an important thing for the administration at that time, because many of the faculty used the Co-Op to print their lesson helps, to do things for the faculty, and the faculty had the majority vote at that time on the Co-Op Board; and there were some of us that felt that this thing was dominated by the faculty and not the students, and we couldn't understand how the Texas Book Store, next door, could sell books cheaper--give us our discount in advance--and at the Co-Op, we didn't get our discount until the year was over, and they used our money.... So we pressed for having a majority on that board that would be students. The administration was not necessarily in favor of it, but they did meet with us, and we had a vote of the Co-Op membership, and it was changed. I think the big problem with the Co-Op, then as now, was that private enterprise can always operate a business better than a co-op, or government, or school agency; they're not business people, and the fellow that was manager of the Co-Op at that time, [Ed] Rather...I remember when I went on the Board the main thing I was interested in was, "what's Rather getting out of it?" Well, after spending a lot of time, and going over all the records, so far as I could tell Rather wasn't getting anything out of it other than a salary and a car.... I don't recall at any time giving any specific items that the student government was looked upon as being bashful as far as the administration was concerned. The mere fact that we worked with the administration didn't mean that there was anything evil about it.

DSG: The reason I asked was this--when you look at the activism of the late '60s or early '70s, there was expressed frequently by the students a feeling of impotence with the administration. Of course, they were asking for a lot more, but they felt like the administration wasn't listening.

GARRETT: Well, see, you're judging 1936 by retrospect of almost 50 years. We never heard the words "student rights." By God, we were there to get an education. Our rights should be unabashed to get that

education; we should have the right to have our own activities--those were the priorities at the time. Now since then, the so-called "students' rights"--"we must have a representative on the Board of Regents, we must have a representative on the Faculty Senate," and this, that and the other--taking positions on national and state political issues, and moral issues such as war and things of that sort: that was not of our day. But it doesn't mean that people like Shivers and Connally and Pickle were dominated by some administration; they were all pretty free-thinking people, and all pretty successful...except me. [laughing]

DSG: All right, let's jump forward about 35 years. You were on the Board of Regents from January 1969 to January 1975, during the presidencies of Joe Krier, Jeff Jones, Bob Binder, Dick Benson, Sandy Kress, and Frank Fleming. Put yourself in the Regents' shoes, looking at it from the other side; how did you see the Students' Association during that time?

GARRETT: Let me say that as far as Krier's administration was concerned, when I first went on the Board, he was a young man you could sit and talk to, and I think he had the same sort of attitude that I had, generally, when I was president. I was very pleased with our relationship at that particular time. After that time, there were several of them...I made the statement, "I'm a great believer in retribution, and one of these days one of you guys may be a Regent, and you're going to have to listen to this garbage about 'You don't listen to us.'" When I was on the Board, I think the majority of the regents listened very well. Now oftentimes, when people say "you don't listen to me," they mean, not that you don't listen, but that you don't do the way I want you to do, and that is thrown as an epithet to hurt somebody: "You're so stupid, and you're so close-minded that you won't even listen to me!" Listening was not the problem; the problem was that some of the things that they didn't agree with parts of--a student being on the Board of Regents--and I don't subscribe to that now. More so since I've been on the Board of Regents, because they are a board of directors, as far as listening to students, just like you listen to faculty and administration; you try to listen to everybody.... We heard that epithet not only from students, but also from minority groups, political groups, every other kind of group. But we have got to recognize that in the '60s and early '70s, we went through a social revolution in this country--the Viet Nam War, the "me" generation, the "street people," the so-called "hippie" movement--that was a phase of our social history that we'd never seen before in this country, and I hope never will again. It kind of developed into an attitude of everybody doing "his thing."

We lost structure. We lost discipline; discipline isn't a good word--maybe I should say structure. How much structure there ought to be in the University is a matter of difference of opinion. Back in the '30s, freshman girls had to live in a freshman dormitory; freshman men had to live in approved housing facilities; you had to be a senior before you could live in unauthorized housing.... No fraternity or boarding house or dormitory would permit use of any kind of alcoholic beverage.... And there was, I think, respect for administration.

During this upheaval, with everybody doing his "thing," there was resistance to almost all authority--parental, governmental, administrative authority--at these institutions, and I don't think you can compare it to the situation in 1936, nor can you compare it to the situation now.

Rightly or wrongly, I got the feeling that most of the problems should have been worked out with the administration, not when it finally got to the Board of Regents.

DSG: Was that due to the weakness of the administration, or just overzealousness on the part of the students?

GARRETT: No; if they didn't get their way with the administration, they wanted to go to the regents, and of course the regents wouldn't listen to them, because most of the time we supported the administration. I felt that deep down that Jeff Jones and all of them knew what the rules were, but I always felt that it was pretty much for the media's benefit.... A good example of what I'm talking about was that I went to a student retreat, right after being elected, and some guy dressed in clothes that looked like he'd gotten them from a Salvation Army camp--I later found out he was from a very wealthy family--stood up and said, "What right do you have that you should be serving on the Board of Regents when you don't know a goddamned thing about education?"

DSG: This was directed at you.

GARRETT: To me; yeah.

DSG: Well...?

GARRETT: I told him, "Well, you'll have to talk to Governor Connally, because he was the one who appointed me, and I was very honored to serve; but other than that I can't answer your question, because obviously it's a statement on your part and not a question." But really the interview didn't improve as time went on. I was invited back to the same group in about seventy-five or -six, I've forgotten when it was, and someone asked me, "Look, do you want the questions written out first?" And I said, "No, sir; if I come I want to answer whatever they ask." You know, the questions they asked me in '76 centered around "Why isn't something done to tenured professors that haven't changed their notes since 1940?" They were interested in students having more to do with curriculum, that would suit their needs for what they wanted to do: "What are the job prospects when I get out?" In other words, they were centered around interest in their education; they were interested in better quality courses at the University, and things that you would expect university students interested in their institution and their education to ask. There was a time when students wanted to know why the regents would invest in stocks that made things that were used in the destruction of people in war--which of course would be General Electric, General Motors, you just go right on down the line! Those social issues didn't even come up; the questions were

centered around the improvement of the University program and things of that sort, not around social issues.

DSG: Was there any kind of a conscious attempt by the Board of Regents in the early '70s to weaken the student government in any way?

GARRETT: So far as I know, there was nothing done to weaken the student government. What action was taken with respect to the student government was what was felt to be, and what was interpreted by us to be, the great, great majority view of the student body.

DSG: Which was?

GARRETT: The election of the blanket tax, as to whether or not you wanted student government, because the student government had programs on abortion, they had activities instructing people with respect to their position on the draft, and those kind of things that had to do with politics and political viewpoints, and nothing to do with the campus; and the majority of the students were not in tune with it. Now and then, I would do anything in the world that I could to help a student government that I felt was representative of a majority of the students. I think that the percentage of people that vote is a challenge to current student government leaders to regain the confidence and the respect; but I think they're going to have to do it on campus issues and not national and international and sociological items that apply to the world. I don't know what your campus problems are now; parking, and a lot of these kinds of things, the students MUST involve themselves in, but--it's a practical thing that you'll find in life; if you want something from the Legislature, you don't fight 'em. If you want something..., you've got to keep communication open. You can't browbeat the administration into kneeling to your will; you've got to work with it. I think that if the student government turns its attention to student/campus problems, whether it be curriculum or student/faculty relationships, or student/administration, or student-to-student relationships--when they return responsible leadership, those are the issues that they can do something about. You can't do anything about abortion; you can't do anything about the Viet Nam War. I'm hopeful that now that a more responsible group of students have asked for the return of student government, that they can build that respect on being vocal on student issues.

DSG: Do you think it's a feasible exercise today, on a campus of almost 50,000 people?

GARRETT: Well, with 50,000 people, your student problems ought to be worse.

DSG: But when the Students' Association is operating with a vote of less than about 10% of the student body on most major elections...

GARRETT: Well, I don't think you've had a real test of student go-

vernment yet under its new format. It's going to take time, and it may be that if they address themselves to campus issues effectively, as distinguished from just being activists to be activists, that support may grow. But I think really your question answers itself: when something represents only ten percent, and really, it was a close vote, so you might say there's six percent--when you're supported by six percent, that's got to improve before it will have too much of an impact. I'm sure the administration would really seek a responsible, constructive dialog with students. I'm sure that President Flawn's policy of inviting in various student leaders is a hunger on his part to have better contact with the students, and I think the Students' Association affords a wonderful vehicle for the administration to have contact with student thought.

DSG: How critical do you think it is today for the Students' Association to have control of the student services fee--or at least a greater degree of input? That seemed to be the major issue that came up when we were trying to decide whether or not to approve the new Constitution after it had been changed by President Flawn and the Board of Regents--that we really don't have the substantive control of the fee.

GARRETT: Well, I think that unless things have changed, the Athletic Department had certain problems, the Daily Texan had certain problems, student government had certain problems--it's a matter of a business decision, really; an overall decision. And with student control, completely, I would think there would be some danger of the emotion of the moment. I can remember when the football team had very little support; well, you can't cut the Athletic Department off just because at that particular moment it has a low acceptance level. Same way with student government. There have been times when people wouldn't give five cents to the Daily Texan; but you can't kill the Daily Texan.... Students have to have a vehicle to let off steam, and if they want to criticize the president of the University, or the president of the Students' Association, or the regents--that's part of our system. You shouldn't kill the Texan; I don't care what the temporary leadership might be, because, you know, it goes in cycles: you'll have responsible leadership, then you'll have completely irresponsible leadership, and I think the overall judgement of the administration as a final arbiter between these various factions is a stabilizing influence that's good. And they're there over the long period, and have the long view....

.....

I had a parent say to me the other day, "How in the world can the administration let this 'UTmost' go out? It has no redeeming literary features; it's not humorous; someone described it as 'Saturday Night Live in print.'" Well, you know, they probably when they were in school did some of the same silly things, but we forget about that as time goes on, and I think that this continuity that the administration gives is something that in the long run is better for the students.

DSG: So you think there should be student input...

GARRETT: Oh, MUST be...

DSG: ...But not necessarily the last word.

GARRETT: But not the final word. Sure, input. Maybe I was milque-toast when I was president, but I don't remember being denied access to the administration. We had to go, for example, for College Night, and ask the administration for money to help us put on the program; there was nothing in the budget for it.... I think input is great, but just because the input is not always bought, that doesn't mean they're not listening. But really I think that most administrators try very hard to have a student body that has confidence in them, in being fair. I've known all the presidents since Dr. Benedict personally, and I have never known one whose attitude toward students is that they shouldn't be listening to them. Now some of them had a better faculty of communicating with the students than others....

DSG: To kind of wrap it up, then...if you had to give one piece of advice to the new leaders today...to help make it succeed, what what would it be?

GARRETT: I think--just offhanded, shooting from the hip--it seems that, number one, they need to concentrate on campus and University-related issues that students are vitally interested in on a day-to-day basis that affect their curriculum, their services, things of that sort; and secondly, to recognize that the administration is not made up of insensitive individuals, but rather people that do want to make this a great University, and do their damndest to set up a continuous dialog. And just because the administration does not do exactly like they think, that they do not develop the rhetoric of "the administration won't listen to us."

## SYDNEY REAGAN

February 12, 1983

Sydney Reagan has been an observer of students on the campuses of American universities for much of his adult life. He received a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of Texas at Austin, and went on to study at the School of Law. It was between his second and third years in law school that he served as UT Students' Association President (1939-1940). After completing his law degree in 1941, he earned a master's degree and a Ph.D. in Economics at Harvard University. Later, he returned to the state of Texas, and from 1955 to 1981 held a position as Professor of Real Estate at Southern Methodist University. After his mandatory retirement there, he accepted his current post as Senior Vice-President of the Robert Lamm Company, a real estate marketing firm.

Dr. Reagan's constant exposure to campus politics, including his extensive involvement in the governance of SMU, has given him a keen feeling for its complicated operations. We met on a Saturday afternoon at his Dallas home, where he related to me his recollections of his term as student body president, and some observations on the current problems facing student government.

DSG: The first thing I wanted to ask you about would be about the committee system that you had set up. I've noticed that as the student government matured in the '30s and '40s you had an increasing number of committees and a more extensive system setup. How were you organized in that area?

REAGAN: Well, on some of the committees the president of the student body made direct appointments. You had certain standing committees, for example, you had the Board of Directors of the Co-Op Bookstore; the Board of Publications, where the president sat as member and also appointed members. Then you had a variety of other committees where oftentimes they were appointed with the approval and consent of the Student Assembly, which involved being able to be sure that you had the majority of votes on the Assembly in order to appoint somebody. And then you had certain special committees....

DSG: Within the Assembly?

REAGAN: They might have been "ad hoc" special committees; for example, I'm thinking about a problem we had with respect to the Co-Op Bookstore, and a special committee was appointed with a student from the business school, a master's student, chairing it.

DSG: Was that composed of Assemblymen, or was that some people from the Assembly and some from the campus community?

REAGAN: Part from the Assembly, but mainly from the campus community.

DSG: What about some of the legislative committees that you had--the

Public Relations Committee; there was one on Student Labor Conditions around campus; there was one on Cost of Campus Living; and the Safety Council. Were those pretty active?

REAGAN: Some more than others. So far as the Safety Council goes, I don't recall any activity on its part. So far as the Student Labor Committee goes, that committee as I recall grew out of a strike of student workers at a restaurant on the Drag.... In this particular case, at this restaurant the students were working four hours a day for three meals, and then they were also being required to sell so many meal tickets for the restaurant; and apparently it reached the point where there was just a spontaneous strike. One evening, one of the workers just said, "Look, I've had it. Let's strike!" And so they did; and I didn't get word on this until sometime during the next morning, and the students were picketing the place.... Of course, students flocked in to see what was happening, and Arno Nowotny, the Assistant Dean of Students, called in the strike leaders, and told them to stop this before sundown, or they would be out of school by the next morning. And they understood, so they called off the strike.

Arno played hardball; I doubt if, during the '70s or late '60s, he had tried something like this, the whole student body would have risen up in total rebellion. But they knew that their education would be brought to a halt if they didn't [end the strike]. So as I recall, the Student Assembly set up a committee to look into labor conditions; but as I recall, not much came of it. I might say that my last year at the University, after I'd been student body president, I was completely flat broke. I was working about 40 hours a week, and making about thirty cents an hour--and I was a senior law student.

DSG: You had a new constitution which was approved by the students, apparently right around the time you were elected president, in April of '39. And there was some problem with the way it was submitted; it didn't get to the regents until November. What was the reason behind that new constitution? What were the major differences between it and the old constitution?

REAGAN: My memory is very blank on that.... I don't recall that there were any big, huge, burning issues; it was more a matter of just updating it.

DSG: There was something about the new constitution making no provision for a representative from the Department of Journalism....

REAGAN: My memory is blank on that...I just have no recollection of that.

DSG: You were funded by eleven cents out of each \$10.50 blanket tax that was purchased. Was that enough? Did you ever find the Students' Association hurting for funds?

REAGAN: Well let's put it this way--there were so many demands on it, and it had to be sliced up so many ways, that we just made do on what



we had; that's the best way I can put it.

DSG: You could have used more?

REAGAN: We obviously could have used more, but we just made do.

DSG: Look at the students' participation in their government. Would you say the representatives, the committee members, and so forth, were motivated by an interest in self-government--in helping the thing work--or was it more promoting the interests of their group, or prestige or something like that?

REAGAN: All three, just like in any other democratic society; you had people that were altruistic, and you had people that had a rather narrow group interest, and you had some that took the position of, "How much personal publicity and glory can I get out of it?" No different from any other big democratic group.

DSG: OK, what about from the "fraternity clique"?

REAGAN: Once on the Assembly, and once student body president, generally I think the people were trying to take a University-wide point of view. Now the fraternity clique had a majority on the Assembly, which created problems for me in the sense that we had to negotiate and work...for example, the vice-president of the student body was a fraternity clique man, Roger Sullivan.

DSG: You were an independent?

REAGAN: I was an independent. It would have been more comfortable for me--at least I thought it would have been.... You worked with with them; you used persuasion...I mean, the fraternity representatives were not a monolithic group. I would say that you had more fighting in the elections than you did afterwards.

DSG: So the lines weren't as sharply drawn after they were already seated in the Assembly.

REAGAN: No, no. And when I would need to appoint...the toughest appointments I had were Princesses to different things, and that is awful. What you tried to do there was spread it around--some independents, some sororities....

.....  
DSG: Uh...Princesses...?

REAGAN: Oh, it was "Princess of..." something or other; the student body president would appoint these ladies to represent the University at some activity.... But anyway, the lines were sharper before you got in than after you got in. Now I was a Barbarian ["barb"], an independent, and representing the lower-income group on campus; I knew that, and that's why I was elected, because I wanted to try to do something for them. The fraternities and sororities, which represented the

upper-income group, knew that, so they did not view me as kindly as they would have had "Dub" Singleton [the fraternity candidate for president] been elected, because he would have been one of them, whereas I was one of "THEM," you know, the "others." But I never forgot where I came from.

DSG: And neither did they.

REAGAN: That's right. We had several independent presidents in a row preceding me, and prior to that we had fraternity members that were presidents, and I always felt that they gave pretty short shift to the independents.

DSG: But you didn't do the same thing to the fraternities.

REAGAN: I tried not to.... Following me, the independents ran Joe Kilgore, and the fraternity group ran J. Ward Fouts, and Joe lost.

DSG: You mentioned earlier that the independents were not really as well organized...

REAGAN: That's right.

DSG: So they weren't yet into a party-type system, as later evolved?

REAGAN: That's right. There were a couple of earlier efforts to organize the independents into a party as such, and it just didn't work. From a practical point of view, the independents were organized around a leader; in my case, I had a background that appealed to them. Jake [Pickle] had appointed me chairman of the Cultural Entertainment Committee, which gave me exposure; then John [Connally] reappointed me to that position. And then I was president of a newly organized group, called the Men's Intercommunity Association (MICA), which was an effort to organize not for political purposes, but for social purposes, the independents on campus. So I was president of that not the year that I ran for [student body] president, but the year before. I was the first president, and got it organized, and so on. I was an organizer of co-op housing on the University campus, and then was president of the largest co-op house, the Campus Guild, and believe it or not, I was an excellent dishwasher! We lived for \$15.00 a month. Then I organized the Intercooperative Council, and one of our main things was group buying, and we made some real economies by buying collectively for all the co-op houses.

So I had all of these connections, and ties, and all--both organizationally speaking, but even more important, personally speaking.

DSG: And they helped you get elected?

REAGAN: Oh yes. And I had credibility; they knew me and felt like they could trust me and depend on me. They were willing to work and help get the vote out.

DSG: You had phenomenally high voter turnout during your year--in the fall Assembly election you had about 4,200 turn out out of 10,000 registered; in the presidential election in the spring you had close to 7,000. Judging on that, or anything else, would you say that the Association was at the time pretty representative of the students?

REAGAN: Yes.

DSG: Was it a pretty good cross-section from across the campus?

REAGAN: Yes; yes, I think a pretty good cross-section. And I think the students were very much in favor of student government, and very much supportive of it.

DSG: If it came under fire, they didn't tend to turn on it immediately?

REAGAN: Oh, no! No, no; you didn't have any of this "turning" on student government. Now, one of the candidates for student body president, Jack somebody...he would sort of make fun of student government, but he really believed in it, and he told me, "I'm not going to get enough votes to hurt you, so let's just have some fun with this," is what it amounted to. I don't think he made a serious effort to cut into my votes. And then there was another guy that ran, as an independent, that was a nut, and he really thought he was going to get elected. On the night of the election, when the votes were coming in and I was winning very strongly, he came up to me, very very mad, and said, "The only reason you're winning is because you have a machine!" And I said, "Thank God I did." That's the way you win elections. I would, in campaigning, go...from rooming house to rooming house, and go from room to room, and many times I knew the student, and if I didn't I'd introduce myself and say, "I'm your independent candidate, and I'd appreciate your vote." And I went through the dormitories that way.... They would know that I was there, and I thought enough about them to get their vote.... Then as now, I really did not have an incredible amount of charisma, like John Connally or Joe Kilgore, but when I could work with people over a period of time, I could get their loyalty and support.

DSG: How would you describe the Students' Association's relationship with the Board of Regents?

REAGAN: Zero. In my entire time as president of the student body, I never communicated, directly or indirectly, with the Board of Regents.

DSG: Did you ever try to?

REAGAN: No; no point!

DSG: Why not?

REAGAN: About the best way I can think of is this: I grew up in south Arkansas. Blacks didn't vote back then, and they didn't even

try because they knew that it was pointless.

DSG: It wasn't the accepted channels.

REAGAN: It just wasn't done. Now, when I was president, we had a new [University] president who came in: this was Dr. [Homer] Rainey. Now Dr. Rainey came in and the old establishment at the University--sort of a group that felt like they had really been running things, Arno Nowotny, Bill McGill, in particular. Bill was a "fixer," and he was over in Student Publications. Bill McGill and Arno worked very closely together. This old group felt very uneasy about Homer Rainey. I liked Homer Rainey from the word go, and felt like he was a real breath of fresh air; and I was able to work with him as much as a student body president at that day and age could work with a president.

DSG: Which was...how much?

REAGAN: On certain major issues...and, as he told me once, he said, "Syd, you know I have problems, and so there's a limit to what I can do." It's the truth.

DSG: Did you feel like you could go to him or the rest of the University administration when you needed help?

REAGAN: I could go to Rainey. I could go to Dean Moore, who was over--all Dean of Students; but Moore was not in very good health, and not too effective. Nowotny was Assistant Dean, but he was more or less dealing with the students. I could not go to Nowotny, because you either did it Arno's way, or he would say you were a Bolshevik.

DSG: I believe it was Jenkins Garrett who told me that whenever they needed something, they would go right to Nowotny or Bill McGill...

REAGAN: See, they were fraternity people, and they were establishment people; I was not establishment.

DSG: And that was really why the relationship was so much different?

REAGAN: Yes.

.....  
DSG: What about your relationship with the faculty and staff, on the University committees and so forth where you had student representatives?

REAGAN: Sometimes tumultuous. We had some real go-arounds on the Student Publications Board, and you had a chairman from the Department of Journalism that, unless he had his way, he really would get horribly upset. And show it. Of course, Bill served on that also.

.....  
DSG: What kind of power, if any, did the Students' Association have in the non-student appointments, say for deans, etc.?

REAGAN: None.

DSG: None at all? Did you try?

REAGAN: No. They would have told us, "Look, Bud, it's none of your business who we appoint." You must understand, this was a different era: the students in the '60s would have burned the place down had they tried to operate in the '60s like they did in the latter part of the 1930's. I mean, you just had to stand up and yell, and run the risk of being called a Red.

DSG: To what degree did the Student's Association control the allocation of the Blanket Tax? One of the reasons I ask is because I'm a little confused because Jenkins Garrett told me that rather than working it out in the Assembly, he and Dean Nowotny and Bill McGill kind of worked it out, along with a few other representatives; they all met in Nowotny's office and worked out the allocation there.

REAGAN: When I was president, the Assembly did it. And of course, there was a great tendency to follow precedent; obviously, if we had tried to make drastic changes, for example, cutting down on the amount going to the Athletic Department, we would have run into some serious problems from the administration. But within these constraints the Assembly did it, and I recall no interference from above.

DSG: So the allocations that the Assembly determined, that was pretty much the way it was.

REAGAN: Yes. As I recall, we had a committee that made the recommendations, but I don't recall any intervention from above.

DSG: How important would you say the power to allocate the Blanket Tax was to the perceived on-campus power of the Students' Association?

REAGAN: It was important, yes; various groups would come into the Assembly and make strong pleas for more money...so it was viewed as an important power.

DSG: With what other sorts of campus-related issues did the Students' Association concern itself? What were the main ones? You mentioned earlier about the Co-Op investigation....

REAGAN: Of course, the manager of the Co-Op refused to testify [in open hearings], and based on the information that I had, he probably was wise to take the Fifth Amendment.

DSG: He later testified in closed hearings, didn't he?

REAGAN: Yes; yes, that's right. Looking back on it, I think Mr. Rather was running it as though it were his private business, and I think he honestly viewed it that way; these are just things you do in a private business. For example, he would have people who worked at the Co-Op

rent rooms at his home, and he would have the janitor at the Co-Op go out to his home and take care of the yard, this type of thing. He viewed it as his private business; we viewed it as a public trust.

DSG: Was that what prompted the investigation?

REAGAN: Yes.

DSG: And the request for the investigation came through the Inter-cooperative Council, didn't it?

REAGAN: Yes, that's right.

DSG: Was that at your request, or...?

REAGAN: No; other people by that time were running the Interco-op Council.

DSG: What came of that investigation? There were a lot of suggestions and recommendations made...

REAGAN: I'm not sure anything came of it. We had two students on the Co-Op Board of Directors, but the administration dominated that board, and the chairman took a real hard-nosed attitude on this thing, and he wouldn't even speak to me after that investigation.

.....  
You see, the Board was in control, and it was controlled by the "old guard" at the University.

DSG: So it was relatively ineffective.

REAGAN: Yes.

DSG: And Mr. Rather stayed on, and everything continued as it was?

REAGAN: Oh, absolutely; that's right. You see, the person that followed me as president, J. Ward Fouts, was not sympathetic with this. There was no follow-through; this was one of the problems on many of these things.

DSG: The preamble of one of the Constitutions, I'm not sure if it's the one you were working under, said that one of the purposes of student government was "to allow students participation in the overall policy- and decision-making processes of the University"--participation in the University governance as a whole. As far as student-related administrative policy decisions went, how much input did the Students' Association have?

REAGAN: Not much. Not much. I was an ex officio member of various committees, one of them being the calendar committee; this would take retaliatory action against any group that violated any regulations. Back then, before a fraternity or sorority could give a party, they

had to get it on the social calendar....

DSG: Was the Students' Association ever able to initiate any kind of administrative policy-making process--changes in regulations, or anything?

REAGAN: No. Not that I recall. On the things you're talking about, a lot of it would be through persuasion; for example, I talked with President Rainey on a number of occasions on various issues, but it was informal and persuasive--trying to get him to do something or other--but there was no formal method, no formal role on University policy. That was just beyond the scope of one's imagination at that point.

DSG: How was the Association involved in off-campus affairs, say city or state politics, any kind of lobbying activities? You had a couple of resolutions...

REAGAN: ...with respect to the war situation. We did not get involved in any way in politics in the city of Austin, nor in state government, although before I was student body president there was certain unofficial involvement by the student body. With the war coming on, the students were not fools; they knew that if we got in the war, they were going to be the ones that were going to be shot up; and so there was a great deal of concern over this. And I recall that one time there was a resolution passed by the Student Assembly which was sent to our congressmen, and one congressman wrote back a very, very bitter letter.

DSG: That was Ed Gossett.

REAGAN: Ed Gossett, accusing us of, as I recall, all kinds of things. And I'm sure that if this had occurred in the late '60s, the students would have marched on Washington and lynched him. But Ed expressed the viewpoint of the right-wing then, that "Who in the hell are these stupid students to talking about things like this?" Well, we thought it was some of our business since...since...it was my generation that got killed. Many of my best friends got killed.

But Ed Gossett didn't! Ed Gossett finally retired from Congress, and then became general counsel for a major corporation, and then, after he got too old for any of those activities, became a judge.

DSG: Do you think on the whole, though, that the politicians listened to what the students were saying?

REAGAN: Very little; very little. We didn't vote.

DSG: So it didn't really carry much weight, the "official voice" of the opinion of the student body, off-campus.

REAGAN: I'm afraid it didn't. This resolution expressed the view, at this point in history, of a majority of the students on the University of Texas campus. We were representing them. But as I say,

the Ed Gossetts were very critical of us for expressing how we felt, even though our generation were the ones that were going to have to die and face the bullets.

DSG: Was the Students' Association an effective official voice for student opinion from of the average student? Did he see it as representing his views as being "his" Students' Association?

REAGAN: I really think so, by and large.

DSG: Did the students seem to perceive that they were truly "self governed"? Did they have a feeling of belonging to their Association, or was it kind of something that they were dimly aware of, but didn't care too much about?

REAGAN: Well, I think that they, at that point in history, with the climate of opinion, and what was possible, and what was not possible, they felt like the student government was representing them, and was trying to voice their positions. Now I think obviously some students were more keenly aware of this than others, and I think there were obviously some students that felt like it was a waste of time, just as in any democratic society there are people who don't want involvement.

DSG: Which would you say was the larger group?

REAGAN: Well, I would say in view of the very large voter turnout, that there was a feeling of involvement. We had much larger voter turnouts than you have in elections for president of the United States.

.....  
DSG: What would you consider to be the one or two outstanding accomplishments of the administration of Sydney Reagan? What lasting mark did you leave?

REAGAN: I haven't even thought about that since May of 1940! I would list three things. One, I think that we gave the independents, the barbarians, the "unwashed"--we were known by all three terms--added status. We gave them a sense that they were truly being represented. This is emotional and psychological, but it's very important; I was their president. Secondly, I think that with the investigation of the Co-Op Bookstore, we made the entire establishment a damn sight more cautious in the way they operated. They knew that they might have the whistle blown on them; that was the first time, at least since I'd been around the campus.

DSG: So the investigation really did have an effect.

REAGAN: In that sense, I think it had that effect.

We gave Homer Rainey support, which he needed and earned, and of which I was very proud. The fact that he later got fired for holding his ground on protecting academic freedom indicated that we were justified in giving support to this man. I'd never met him until he came to the campus as president, so I had nothing to do with his



selection (nobody asked me who I thought ought to be president!). But as I worked with him, I came to view him as a very honest, able, courageous man that deserved the support of the student body. I don't mean we gave him unblinding support, but in effect, we were trying to be supportive.

With respect to the labor situation, here again, I don't think we can point to anything and say, "We accomplished this. We got this changed." I think we brought about more of an awareness of the plight of students working. Here you had this huge labor pool, completely unorganized and willing to work for anything to try to get an education. I think we made the University community, both administration and students, more aware of it.

DSG: To kind of wrap it up, then, let's look ahead. What prospects do you see for our now infant Students' Association? Is student government even a workable exercise on a campus with a population approaching 50,000 people? What do you think?

REAGAN: May I now comment, bringing into focus my experiences as a professor, part of it chairing the School of Business Administration, at Southern Methodist University from 1955 to 1981; an elected member of the Faculty Senate...during the greater portion of that time, and a member of the executive committee of the Faculty Senate during a considerable portion of that time; and as President of the Faculty Senate for two years, 1969-1970, which was a very tumultuous time, relatively speaking, on the SMU campus. Of course, you must understand that the SMU campus is not the University of Texas campus.... We had students demanding a role in governance of the University, and the University faculty and the administration gave them a role....

At one point, I was being viewed as an arch-reactionary--and by those standards I probably was. For example, we had an Assembly in the School of Business, and about a third of the people on that Assembly were elected students. The then dean wanted to abolish all course requirements, and let the students judge what they should take. Well, I opposed this...and I remember one very heated debate in the Student Assembly; and I was taking this rather novel, right-wing, reactionary sort of position, and afterwards a young lady came up to me with fire in her eyes, and she said, "Who are you to determine things I should take? That is my decision, it is my life to lead, not yours! What right do you have to make decisions affecting my life?" And the answer was, "I am a professor. I have an obligation to try to see to it that you come out of here a well-rounded, well-educated person that can fit into the community, both the civic community and the business community; and there's certain things that I think you ought to know when you get out of here, and I'm going to try to see to it that you know them, whether you like it or not."

This structure of governance, with the students being involved in all kinds of decisions, collapsed of its own weight just a few years later, because the students really didn't want it. They didn't want participation to that extent. Now we have student government at SMU, and I've been a very strong supporter of it, and we still have some student representation on our Assembly; but we don't have the

dominance that we did in the late 1960's and early '70s, and we don't have the involvement. We now have the Student Senate, and we have the Faculty Senate, and we have areas of responsibility.

.....

Two years ago, my wife was President of the Faculty Senate--of course, she had been through the fires with me at the University of Texas, and was very sympathetic with student government--and she worked very closely with the student government, and they set up several joint committees on certain very specific topics: on improving the academic atmosphere, and certain other areas....

The thing about student government is that you have a complete turnover every four years; and what happened five years ago is ancient history, unknown to the present student body. They have no sense of history. If the students can develop a sense of history, a sense of continuity, a sense of follow-through, a sense of tradition...tradition is both good and bad, but in student governments we need more traditions. I don't know quite how to accomplish this (if I did, I'd be a genius), but if there is some way that the students can know that the University didn't begin on the day of their arrival, and that it didn't end the day they left, then we'll have better student governments. And also, if students will learn that each separate administration doesn't have to develop a new horse to ride; there are probably plenty of things left over, unresolved, from the old administration, or things that have been started that need follow-up, that need continuity.

That's a long sermon!

DSG: Well, if you kind of had to condense that all into some concrete suggestions--if you were to sit down with our new president, today, and he were to say to you, "Dr. Reagan, what two or three big suggestions could you give to me to help me make the Students' Association work, to make it something viable?", what would you tell him?

REAGAN: I would say one, take the very lightest, easiest academic load you can take and still retain eligibility to serve as student body president, so you can devote yourself to it; it's a full time job. Secondly, keep lines of communication open with all segments of the University. I don't care how much you hate their guts or how much they hate your guts; talk with them. Get their input. And listen to them; you might learn something. Third, try to work out things; be willing to compromise. There's nothing wrong with compromise; that's what democracy's all about. Nothing immoral about it. Nothing immoral about being a politician--thank God we've got 'em; they resolve these conflicts without bloodshed. Then, try to pick two or three major issues that your administration can focus on that are meaningful, and that would be viewed as meaningful by the student body; try to keep the rest of the shop running, but concentrate your energy on certain things that are hopefully more than passing interests. It's awfully easy to "chase rabbits": try to pick some things that are crucial. What they would be, I couldn't say, because I don't know.

**BAREFOOT SANDERS****February 11, 1983**

*Barefoot Sanders was a student at the University of Texas from 1942 to 1949 while he earned bachelor's and law degrees. It was during his final year in law school, 1948-49, that he was president of the Students' Association, after serving the previous year in the position of Head Cheerleader. The University population had swelled during the post-war years; many social changes were occurring as well, most notably, the admission of the first Black as a student in the law school.*

*After his graduation, Sanders was elected to three terms in the State Legislature. In the 1960's, John F. Kennedy appointed him as the U.S. District Attorney for northern Texas; later, Lyndon Johnson made him assistant U.S. Attorney General, and then his legislative counsel while he was in office.*

*At the end of the Johnson administration, Barefoot Sanders returned to his law practice in Dallas and, shortly thereafter, was appointed a United States District Judge. I spoke with Judge Sanders at his office in the Earle Cabell Federal Building in Dallas.*

DSG: During your term, you had a fairly extensive reworking of the Constitution, according to what I have read. What was the reason for that and what were the changes that you made?

SANDERS: You know, I really can't recall. I remember at the time-- I think I remember--that it had been some years, and in terms of student government if a constitution had gone unamended or unrevised for three or four years, it was probably considered ancient. But there were thought to be quite a number of structural problems with the Constitution that I just really don't recall. I remember we made it sort of the first order of business, to get that done. And there was general agreement; there was some politics played--my friend Ben McDonald fought it, and I just always thought it was kind of for the hell of it.

DSG: Was he really against the Constitution?

SANDERS: I never really thought so. See, he had opposed me in the race for student body president, and I defeated him. Ben was later mayor of Corpus Christi; of course, we didn't know that then, and I didn't think of him at the time as sincerely opposed to the Constitutional revision. It was just a matter of playing some politics, and we got the revisions made.

DSG: Were the law students generally the ones in the Students' Association to create problems?

SANDERS: Yes; that's where you would look for it more likely than anywhere else. And that was sort of a tradition; in the spectrum of the student body they were rather more conservative. But I think even more than conservative, they were just kind of hell-raisers.

DSG: I read in the minutes where four of your Assemblymen declared their membership in the new Independent Party, and it seems that about this time, '48-'49, you see the rise of parties on campus. What brought that about?

SANDERS: Well, the Independent Party as such had functioned not under the name Independent Party, but the independents were THE political force on campus, and had been for, oh, 15 or 16 years. I was the first fraternity man to be elected since sometime back in the '30s.... I think that the Liberal Party had not come through in the pristine way that people had perhaps thought it should have, so they just went back to the old allegiances. It's easier to draw a line between Greeks and non-Greeks. Otherwise, you start falling out on doctrine.

DSG: About when in the history of the Students' Association did the parties start to become pronounced?

SANDERS: As far as parties as such, when they called themselves a party, that's the first time I remember it. It seems to me like they organized during the fall of my term. The split between the "clique" and the independents had gone on since I had ever...well, went I went down there in '42, it was very much in existence, and the clique endorsed fraternity people, so there'd be only one fraternity candidate running for each office...and the independents would go the other way, and that came generally through MICA, the Men's Independent Campus Association, I think it was, and they tried to keep the number of independents in the race down. I would say it was six or seven to one in favor of the independents, invariably; so they dominated if you split along those lines.

DSG: Even once they declared themselves a party, against the Liberal Party?

SANDERS: Yes.

DSG: Did the parties carry on any kind of activities?

SANDERS: They unsuccessfully tried; I don't think they did that.

DSG: So it wasn't really a tightly bound group.

SANDERS: No. The Liberal Party...just couldn't attract enough ideologically like-minded people. There was sympathy out there, but nobody wanted to be active, and it tended to bog down when you got a bunch of liberal types together.

DSG: So what kinds of things were they promoting?

SANDERS: I don't remember now.

DSG: But they weren't fraternity people.

SANDERS: There were a few, but by and large they were not. It spanned the gap.

DSG: So you really had what would amount to three parties...

SANDERS: Yeah, but the basic split was still the fraternities and the independents.

DSG: You organized, it seemed, a fairly extensive committee system... as you look back to some of the presidents in the '30s, you see them running with six, maybe eight committees...and then you get to your term, and you had twelve or fourteen different committees in the Assembly. How did that work out? Did you find that that gave you more power?

SANDERS: I thought it did. The whole idea was trying to involve the more people, and the more you gave them and you were responsible for it, the fields you could get into, and the more opportunities you gave the different individuals to give that to their particular interests. The idea was to make them a part of it; that diffused the power of the presidency, but at the same time, he kind of built power around him. By and large, I tried to put people in charge who were supporting me.

DSG: The committees were in the legislative branch?

SANDERS: Well, not all. I appointed a few special committees; we set up the liaison committee with the regents, but it may have just been the Assembly people; I don't remember now. We set up something called "Steer Here" to give approval to stores around the campus as to whether they were clean and whether they were treating students right--I think we were probably a little out of bounds on that one. I tried to get people from outside the student government as well as within... I tried to recognize people who wanted to help me, but importantly, people who wanted to do something--there are people running around the University as well as life that have things they want to do, but don't have a vehicle. That was our general approach.

DSG: Was the Students' Association pretty much accessible to the student-at-large who wanted to get something done?

SANDERS: I thought so.... Of course, it was a smaller community back then; at the time I was president, our watermark had been eighteen or nineteen thousand right after the war, and we'd dropped down to fourteen or fifteen thousand, maybe a little lower. It was much easier. And then, the Assembly people came out of the various colleges...and they knew their folks.... So on that kind of thing, we were very successful.

DSG: How was the actual machinery of the Students' Association funded? Were you still on the blanket tax allocation?

SANDERS: Yes.

DSG: Was the total that you got enough? Did you ever find yourself

hurting for funds?

SANDERS: No. We adjusted to what we had. We had offices in the Union building, we had a secretary; I was paid \$50.00 a month; we didn't have money for travel, but we didn't require money for travel, because we wouldn't have thought of it.... I don't remember any problems with that.

DSG: How would you evaluate the degree of student participation in the government? For instance, take the Assemblymen who were elected--were they motivated more by a desire to help the machinery move along, or was it more a personal prestige thing, or to push their own group's interests?

SANDERS: I think it's hard to separate that kind of thing. Of course, my impression of them was that they were motivated by a desire to participate; but you cannot ever separate that totally from the prestige factor of the office. People are not going to go through those pains without some prestige involved. I don't think it was only one, or only the other....

DSG: The thing you hear a lot nowadays is "resume padders," screamed as an accusation....

SANDERS: See, they weren't quite as conscious of that at that time. I don't ever remember thinking about a resume situation; it was a different society.

DSG: Let's go now to the Students' Association in the University context. How would you describe the Association's relationship with the Board of Regents?

SANDERS: Well, we came at a very fortunate time, because it was sort of at the ragtag end of the Rainey time, and then Dr. [T.S.] Painter came in after that in '45. Warfare had died down, and yet there was no communication between the regents and the student government. I know I came up to talk to Dudley Woodward, who was Chairman of the Board, and told him I thought we ought to try to get together; and so we set up a committee, and when the regents would meet, they would be there. It was very helpful.

DSG: You tried to get a student on the Board, didn't you, at one point?

SANDERS: Tried to; it just didn't work out, but I thought it was worth a try. It turned out that there was just not as much reason for antagonism as everybody had always kind of sensed that there was. They were nervous about us...they were very ginger at that first meeting, and we were too; but they would not come and ask us to do things, nor we'd ask them--it was kind of a mutual exchange of information. It was a building of confidence as much as anything else. With the administration, I had a personal friendly relationship with Dr. Painter,...the

Vice-President, Dr. Reddick at Student Publications--but those were personal relationships; we never had any big rows with the administration. I think people were kind of tired of that; it was the post-war generation; they were interested in things they thought were more basic.

DSG: So, you would say it was a good relationship?

SANDERS: I thought it was a good relationship; I was always proud of having set up the committee with the regents. My purpose was not so that we could all walk down the same road together. There's going to be a tension from the start.

DSG: Did you feel like, if the Association needed something, you could go to the regents or go to the administration and say, "We thought this would be a good idea"?

SANDERS: Yes; yes, I did. I had a door that I could knock on. And I think, of course, the students today in turn aren't going to have an access unless they feel like you're going to come with requests that there are reasons behind; you're not going to come and say, "Let's tear down the Main Building tomorrow; how 'bout it?" And I don't have anything specifically in mind that I ever went and asked for, but generally I felt there was access.

DSG: What about your relationship with the faculty and staff? You have students serving on University boards and committees alongside faculty; you had the Faculty-Student Cabinet. How did that work out?

SANDERS: I don't know anything about it one way or the other, I'm sorry to say. I remember on the Student Publications Board...it was a very good relationship.... I don't recall anything adverse.

DSG: Would you say that students were well represented?

SANDERS: I thought they were, and the faculty in general was very receptive. Of course, a lot of people on the faculty just didn't give a hoot about what the students thought....

DSG: What kind of power did the Association have in non-student appointments, say deans, faculty members, committee members, and so forth?

SANDERS: I don't remember having any power.

DSG: Was there any student input requested by the administration?

SANDERS: I don't believe so. It came indirectly, probably, through the Dean of Student Life, Jack Holland...and they were always very interested in what our attitude was. So there was that input. I don't want to say it didn't happen, but I just don't remember it happening. It may have been.

DSG: I was reading...that the Students' Association had already made some recommendations [on allocating the Blanket Tax], which went to the Student-Faculty Committee on Blanket Tax Allocations--I believe that was three faculty members and two students, including Arno Nowotny--and they made several changes in the planned allotments.... What kind of power did you have as far as allocating the student services fee? It sounds like it was subject to more review than it had been at one point.

SANDERS: I think we had some power to recommend, and maybe to set; but I frankly don't recall. A lot of that could be accomplished more through personal relationships with the people involved....

DSG: How important would you say that power was?

SANDERS: Oh, I think it's enormously significant, and could be misused. I think that there need to be checks and balances...I think the power of the purse is obviously very significant. I had a significant control, but I can't tell you total control. But I think it's very important; if you don't have any input on it, that certainly minimizes any impact you're going to have. You need input, for sure. Even if it's not the final say. All of these things can be accomplished, as I say, by building an air of confidence and an exchange of information.

DSG: With what kinds of campus-related issues did the Students' Association concern itself?

.....  
SANDERS: Well, the CEC brought in guest speakers, and so on...you kind of, in a sense, set the campus tenor with the kind of people you were bringing in. If you were going to bring in right-wingers, if you were going to bring in left-wingers, or interesting people, or historical people...they had all of this.... It was a very sought-after appointment.

DSG: OK...Let me go back to the "Steer Here" program for a second. You said a minute ago something about you felt like maybe you had overstepped your bounds....

SANDERS: Didn't think so at the time, it's just in later years. What we did was to set up a committee, sponsored through the student government, and they would go to these eating places, and barber shops, and drug stores, and if they felt that prices were being overcharged, or the places were dirty, whatever, they wouldn't award them a "Steer Here" emblem. And if they thought they were good, they would award them an emblem. Now, if you think about it, that's assuming a hell of a lot of power; some of the people that didn't get a Steer Here emblem sure thought that there was a lot more personality involved than quality of service.

DSG: Was there?

SANDERS: I don't think so; I really never found any of that at all.



I think the program flagged a little bit after a couple of years because there was a lot of resistance, and it's hell to get the student government the kind of resources needed to really do that sort of job.

DSG: It started out with the barber shops...

SANDERS: That's right--the barber shops went up on their prices, and we raised cain about that. That's where it started.

DSG: Did the students have a lot of respect for that? Did they pretty much patronize the establishments that had the Steer Here emblems and not go to the ones that didn't?

SANDERS: I think on the barber shops it hurt 'em good. It sure did, because they came to see me. They said "It's not fair," and I told them it's free enterprise; but I think they came down on their prices. I had a hard time getting a haircut for a while, though.... Wales Madden was involved as chairman of that committee.

DSG: Any other issues that you addressed on campus?

SANDERS: I'm wondering if we did something about teacher evaluations...

DSG: You had a resolution introduced to set up a committee on teacher appraisal....

SANDERS: We may have done something about it; that's about all I can tell you. I know it was a lying subject before I got there, and probably after I left....

DSG: Were you involved in off-campus politics?

SANDERS: No.

DSG: You didn't go lobby the Legislature on issues and so forth?

SANDERS: No, there wasn't really felt to be the need for it.... There was some resolution being introduced that I thought was going to bring the Legislature down on us, and us on them, unnecessarily, but I don't remember what it was.

DSG: So you pretty much concentrated your efforts on-campus?

SANDERS: Pretty much.... The National Student Association tried to get the University to join in, but we didn't really want to.

DSG: How come?

SANDERS: It was thought to be a pinko type organization; and the University was not really scared of pinko-type organizations--I mean, the campus was not a 1950's "blah" campus, it was very activist--but there was just enough of a scare raised about the unknown. I campaigned very

hard for it; I thought it would be a good idea. It was hard to sell as to what it could really do for the University.

DSG: A Student Constitution preamble said that one of the purposes of student government was "to allow students participation in the overall decision-making processes of the University." On student-related administrative policy decisions, how much input did the Students' Association have?

SANDERS: I don't think we had any formal.

DSG: How about informal?

SANDERS: I always thought there was some. I remember talking to Painter...I remember talking to Dudley Woodward many times, but I don't remember the subjects.... There were some people from the State government who came to talk to me about the Sweatt decision.... Not structured, but I felt that there was input. It was a personalized kind of thing, I guess, and some people might not like that, but I think it's a question of how many cooks you can have to make the broth.

DSG: Were you ever able to initiate such actions through those same channels?

SANDERS: Yes, we certainly did; particularly through Woodward on the Board of Regents.

DSG: Did you ever get into city or state politics, anything like that, in the Students' Association?

SANDERS: Well, personally, you know, I was active in the '48 campaign for [U.S.] president, but not as student body president.... I don't recall anything else.

DSG: Would you say that the Students' Association provided an effective "official voice" of the whole student body, first of all from your viewpoint as president?

SANDERS: Well, I think it did insofar as you're going to get a voice of the student body like that. That is a very relative type of term, and I think one would have to be very inflated to say that student government even then, with a much bigger percent of participation, could speak for the whole student body. But yes, I think as much as it was feasible, we did; I think it was representative, and I think we had tentacles, so to speak, into all the various parts of the University student community.

DSG: OK...take the same question about the official voice of the student body, and answer it from the standpoint of the average, rank-and-file student. Did he look upon his Students' Association as being his "official voice" to the administration, the Board of Regents, and so forth?

SANDERS: Well, I don't know. I think he probably did not to the administration; he probably figured if he had one to the Board of Regents, that that was the student government; that if he had any voice in the sense like the Cultural Entertainment Committee or the International Students situation, in areas of activities that were speaking for him...that he would see the student government as it.

DSG: Did the students seem to perceive that they were truly self-governed? Did they have a sense of belonging to their Students' Association?

SANDERS: I think it would be overstating it to say that...I think [the high voter turnout] always reflects a little bit, just like it does outside the student community, what those folks feel about what their government is doing. I'm not trying to talk around the subject, I'm just not quite sure how to answer it. I think they felt that there was a cohesive Students' Association; I don't think they over-rated it in the sense of feeling like it was always telling what was on their hearts and minds, and I don't think that most of them gave it much thought.

DSG: Let me ask you this: was their general attitude toward the Students' Association supportive, especially if you happened to come under fire, or did it tend more towards condemnation?

SANDERS: No, I think it was generally supportive. There would always be people sniping once in a while, but it was generally supportive. The law school types, as we mentioned before, were pretentious, but yeah, it was supportive.

DSG: What would you consider to be the outstanding accomplishments of the Sanders Administration?

SANDERS: Well, I haven't thought about it in so many years that I just don't know...of course, we've talked today about the student regent committee, and I thought the fair business practices, or whatever we called it--these were two big departures. I thought we had a very big bunch of people involved in a lot of things--there was a lot of involvement. I never had people turn me down.

DSG: As a wrap-up, then--look at what is going on now; what prospects do you see for us now, knowing what you do about the size of the campus, and voter turnout.... Is it a feasible exercise to have student government on a campus that big? And if so, what prospects do you see for it?

SANDERS: Well, I don't really have any feel for it now. Of course, I really believe in student government; I think it has to deal more modestly in what it tries to do, because its constituency is so vast and so diverse.... I can't imagine how you would represent 50,000 students, but it has to be do-able. I think it's immensely harder

than it was when I was there.

DSG: Because of the number of people?

SANDERS: Because of the number and diversity, and then I think as much as that, the things the students have demanding time that we didn't have. People are more mobile; they're transient; the opportunities for amusement are there; there's more money around.... There's just many more demands on their time.

DSG: If the new president of the Students' Association came to you, today, and said, "Judge Sanders, what one or two suggestions could you give to me to help me succeed as student body president, and help me get the Students' Association on its feet?", what would you tell him?

SANDERS: I'd tell him I wanted to think about that a little bit! I'd want to think about that. I would restrict my activities--to say, the student government is for the student situation; we're not here to go out and change things around the State, or whatever. Not that I'm against that; I'm for that--it's just that the only way you're going to succeed is restricted within the campus enclave, so to speak. [Better to do that] than to speak out broadly on national issues; again, it's not that I'm opposed to them doing that; I just don't think you can be effective when you do that.

DSG: At least not solely doing that.... Could you combine that with work on campus issues?

SANDERS: Well, first I'd broaden my base...so that people think there is a student government, and that there is some activity in some way that somehow is accomplishing something. Some reason for being, so to speak. THEN you can expand it a little bit in the sense that the head of student government can speak out on state and national issues. Now it might be you can turn it around, and capture the students by speaking out on something that grabs student support, but that's a substitute for student government.

## WALES MADDEN

February 15, 1983

*Wales H. Madden, Jr. served as president of the Students' Association during the fall of 1951. Not long after his marriage and graduation, he was appointed to the UT System Board of Regents; the youngest person ever to become a regent, he sat on the Board for six years (1959-1965). An Amarillo attorney specializing in oil law, Madden is today a member of the University Centennial Programs Board and the Centennial Committee on Academic Excellence; it was during a surprise trip to Austin for a Centennial meeting that he met with me, early in the morning, at his motel.*

DSG: How did you organize the committee system during your term? I've noticed from my research and the people I've talked to that as the Students' Association matures, the committee system seems to develop at a fairly rapid rate.

MADDEN: David, I can't remember that what I did was any different from what had occurred previously.... The committee structure was really very fluid; I don't remember too many Constitutional committees. The committees were developed as the need arose. One thing that was coming to the forefront then was the Flash Card Committee, which students were working on for the first time.... I think probably the most interesting experience I had in the committee aspect was...well, at this time, the University was becoming involved in integration, and the Heman Sweatt case was before the Supreme Court, and a few Black students were present on the campus. One of the Black students approached me to see whether or not I would permit him to serve on a committee, and I said, "Certainly! To the extent you're qualified, you can serve on any committee you want to. I think because this will be the first time this has ever happened, that to protect you and the people on the committee who may have prejudices, I would suggest that if you or any of the other Black students want to serve, just let me know, and we'll get them placed. I would want to let the other people on the committee know that there are going to be Black students serving on the committee, so that if there were any objections, we could work those out...." I regretted that this young man never came back and became involved; I think he was testing me, and found out that not only was I receptive, but anxious to work with the Black students and bring them into the committee structure of student government. And I don't remember why--perhaps he couldn't afford in his academic life to devote the time to it. But I do know that he was most pleased that at that step in his integration experience, he was rather accepted by the other students.

DSG: The other students on the committees would have been accepting of him?

MADDEN: I think probably; but bear in mind that, for example, there were a lot of girl students from East Texas, and I would think that in

courtesy to them, I would have wanted those students to know that there would be Black males on the committee. If they were prejudiced, they might like not to serve with Black students. I have always been sympathetic with and positive towards integration, and I was many years before that; but I didn't want to inject my view into students who would be caught unawares in working with Black students.

DSG: So you didn't make any major changes in the governing structure itself.

MADDEN: I can't remember. I do know that we activated the Student-Regent Liaison Committee, where student leaders met with the Board of Regents.... I felt like that was very necessary, because the regents, some of whom I had known casually, to me were very human people, very dedicated people to the University; and there was no need not to have that avenue of communication between students and regents.

DSG: Was that fairly effective in representing the students' interests?

MADDEN: Sure. The regents were most receptive. Then, the chairman of the board was, I believe, Dudley Woodward, followed later by Tom Seiford, and I had known both of these gentlemen, and had found them to be most cooperative, as were the other regents. They agreed to meet with us for lunch, or whatever circumstances, to talk about things that were of interest to students. And the interests then were not dissimilar to the interests today, as far as student housing, and who would control the blanket tax fee, and how the allocations of the blanket tax would be made, whether or not the deposit fee would come back to the student government (those fees that were never claimed).

DSG: You were still funded by a cut out of the blanket tax?

MADDEN: That's right. I don't really remember how much. I was paid fifty dollars a month....

.....

DSG: Was the amount of funding that you had...sufficient? Did you ever find yourself hurting for funds?

MADDEN: No. The expenses of the Assembly, the committees, and the other functions were not great. I remember we had our Sportsmanship Committee that met with other Southwest Conference schools to work in the area of athletics sportsmanship; it was necessary for those of us who did that to pay a portion of our own travel expenses and such, but I felt that wasn't unreasonable, and I just didn't feel that it was necessary for the student body government to underwrite all of those expenses.

DSG: How would you evaluate the degree of student participation in the government, specifically people who were members of the Assembly, or who were on the committees--were they doing it more out of a sincere desire to serve the student government, serve the students; or was it motivated more by fraternity-independent rivalry, or seeking of personal prestige?

I know that's a hard generalization to make....

MADDEN: Yes, and I think that any answer to that question would probably be not entirely accurate. I would assume, though, in fact I believe, that most of those involved did it because they wanted to do something for their University; that they had an opportunity to serve the students.... The Student Assembly was very conscientious; I do recall that at our Assembly meetings, the attendance was very high, and the participation was immediate and active. The people who had campaigned for those jobs and were elected were, whatever their motivation, serious in fulfilling the responsibilities of those jobs. The Student Court was a good court; by and large, the leading law students served on that court.... The student interest was very genuine; to what extent the competition between the independents and the fraternities motivated the students, I wouldn't know, because at that time we had a political group called the Clique, which was the organization whereby the fraternities and sororities got together to nominate candidates, but also at that time there was more of an amalgamation between the independents and the sororities and fraternities because we were very good friends--through Friars, and Cowboys, and Spurs, whatever, we really got to know each other well. Wilson Foreman was an independent, and I was running as a fraternity man; that made not one whit of difference to us as far as what we were trying to accomplish.

DSG: So you didn't get a feeling of that rivalry being ever-present.

MADDEN: No. I think that to the extent that that rivalry would be interjected, it was done as a political means of getting people excited, as is still the case today between the Democrats and the Republicans; and that the students really did not sense a lot of difference between an independent and a Greek. I know I certainly did not; I honestly had as many good friends among the independents as I did among the Greek world. And I had been real active; I was president of the Interfraternity Council, and had worked with Greek organizations. Through those avenues, I knew and understood the fraternity-sorority system; at the same time, I felt most comfortable in a co-op, or going out and drinking beer with my good friends who were not in fraternities.

DSG: Was there any kind of organized party system, or was it more just the semi-formal division between the independents and the fraternities?

MADDEN: It depended on the personalities of the people involved. If you had a strong leader among the independents, then there would be a more formalized effort to organize them. You had the natural vehicle with the Clique--the fraternity groups--so that was more formalized.... The personality of the president and his close friends kind of dictated which way you went. I have no way to prove this, but I know it, would have been my nature: I'm sure that as many independents were appointed by me as fraternity people, as far as committee assignments.

DSG: Would you say, then, that the Students' Association was fairly well representative of the majority of the students and their interests?

MADDEN: Yes. And I'm glad there has been a resurrection of the student government; often...you're going to have conflicts, and funny things happen, and jokes and all, but by and large, the student government experience is something that is vital to the education of a student who has some interest in becoming involved in the political arena in his city, state, or nation. The issues are not dissimilar, and the vehicles by which elections are held are not dissimilar....

DSG: You talked before of your relationship with the Board of Regents through the Liaison Committee. Was your relationship with the campus administration similarly good?

MADDEN: Yes. There, the liaison was the Dean of Student Life's office, and we were blessed with really decent people as deans--Jack Holland, Bill Blunk, Arno Nowotny--people like that who we came to be very good friends with. These men were tolerant of our desires and our misunderstandings and our enthusiasm as students, and did not try to curtail things we wanted to do that were not destructive to the University. I enjoyed a very fine relationship with the administration.

DSG: Sydney Reagan told me, "I think Arno played hardball--you either did things his way, or he would say you were a Bolshevik." He felt like he couldn't really go to Nowotny, or to Bill McGill...he said his relationship with the administration was more through the President's office.

MADDEN: Well, I can't comment on that; I can react to my own experience and those of others with whom I had some identity. I had been a member of Phi Eta Sigma, and that was the first time I met Arno Nowotny...so I started on a basis of receiving respect from Shorty Nowotny, and right away we had a camaraderie. I had no, I mean no, unpleasant experience with him insofar as speaking the student position. I don't mean that I would equivocate; I certainly did not, but to the extent we disagreed, we disagreed, and there was no intolerance on the part of Shorty. At the same time, the relationship with the President was very comfortable: Dr. [T.S.] Painter was in office then...we had no problems whatsoever.

DSG: And again, you feel that the students' interests were pretty well represented before the administration?

MADDEN: Oh, I sure do. We had no problem with it. Now, I can envision a set of circumstances probably typified by the '60s where communications would have broken down almost entirely. But that was certainly not the case then.

DSG: What about your relationship with the faculty and staff, on those University committees and boards where you had student representation--how was your relationship with them?

MADDEN: David, I can't remember any specifics; I don't recall any



problems at all.

DSG: What kind of power did the Students' Association have in non-student appointments to University committees or boards, or deans and faculty members, etc.? Was there any kind of input sought by the administration, or did you try to have any?

MADDEN: As I remember, students, as is the case today, were asked to serve on appropriate committees as either ex officio members or members in selection of deans and administrative officials. As far as power, I don't recall that students had any "power" in that selection process.

DSG: As far as a vote on the committee goes?

MADDEN: Yes; I don't remember that they did.

DSG: This is the furthest back that I've had anybody tell me that there was any student representation or input--do you recall it starting about your term?

MADDEN: I can't say that it did.

.....  
DSG: To what degree did the Association control the allocation of the blanket tax? Was it something that you worked out in the Assembly, and that was pretty much the way it was, or was it subject to approval from higher up, or to change from higher up?

MADDEN: It seems like it was worked out by the Assembly, but I believe it was subject to approval by the President's office; but I can't remember that specifically, and I can't remember there being any problem.

DSG: Besides the ones you have already mentioned, what kinds of main campus issues did the Association concern itself with?

MADDEN: Oh...I'll probably think of some later...I can't think of any other issues right now.... Beer in the Union, of course...

DSG: What was that?

MADDEN: Well, the students wanted to be able to have beer sold in the Union...we advocated it, but never succeeded; later on, the policy was changed.... We were speaking earlier about the "Steer Here" committee; that was really, I think, an active and constructive effort by students to supervise from the student standpoint the quality of merchandise, food and such, being offered by Drag merchants, and to set up some rules that the merchant would agree to follow insofar as cleanliness and price and such, to get a Steer Here decal. And that was something that was well-received by the students. The Co-Op was a matter of some concern to the students then, and I do remember that, although we had appointed a representative to the Co-Op committee, I attended a lot of those meetings. The Student Union was a very active and important, very essential ingredient of student life. At that time,

the student representatives were the ones who really did create the policies of the Union. The Board of Student Publications--that was, as is the case today, I guess, a matter of great interest. The Athletics Council was a much sought-after position.... But specific issues, I can't remember.

DSG: Was the Students' Association ever able to initiate action as far as policy-making on the administrative level? When you wanted something done, say, changing a University regulation, were you able to initiate the action?

MADDEN: David, I would have felt comfortable doing it; but I can't remember that we did or didn't.

DSG: But you wouldn't have felt like it was out of place.

MADDEN: No; and I felt like if it were reasonable, it would be received in a reasonable fashion.

DSG: How were you involved in off-campus affairs--city, state politics, lobbying the Legislature?

MADDEN: No...I can't remember. At that time, students participated in local politics in their residence....

DSG: So your activities were pretty much confined to on-campus?

MADDEN: Yes.

DSG: How much of an effective "voice" for student opinion would you say the Association provided from of the so-called "average" student, the rank-and-file student who's not really involved that much in student government-type activities?

MADDEN: I think every bit as effective as most governmental entities are. How effective is the Legislature today in reflecting the attitude of the average citizen? Whoever the average person is, he's seldom heard from unless he has a complaint; it's those who are willing to stick their necks out that provide the things that society needs. I think that was not untypical of what the Student Assembly and student government did for the students. You would hear from those who wanted to voice an opinion of concern or dissatisfaction, but not too often people who provide constructive input.

DSG: Take the same question from the point of view of the administration and the Board of Regents--did they see it [the Association] as the voice of the student body, or did they see its requests as just what the student government wanted?

MADDEN: I don't recall having ever been put aside because this was just student government. Now, bear in mind that, then as today, there was access to these people through other organizations; for example,

Friars. Having been active in the Friars and having worked in that capacity with various administrative officials who either met with us at a Friars meeting or at a special function or for a special purpose, discussion would take place then; and it's hard to separate that type discussion from that through the representatives of the Student Assembly. In neither event, though, did I ever experience any sort of frustration insofar as being able to advocate a point that I felt the students were really interested in. Too, though, remember that there was not a degree of suspicion on the part of the administration or the Board of Regents reflected towards students, because of the mores, attitudes, and philosophy of students in the 1950's. As I mentioned a moment ago, we were there in school first to get an education, and secondly to have some fun; that was the recognized attitude of most students who were going to succeed in life someday, and not those who dropped in, had fun, and dropped out. But I never felt frustrated with the administration at all.

DSG: Did students perceive that they were, in a sense, self-governed; did they seem to have a feeling of "belonging" to "their" Students' Association? Was it something they were conscious of, or just another extracurricular activity that someone else participated in?

MADDEN: Probably the latter. I'd say most students felt like it was just another extracurricular activity participated in by those of us who wanted to be politicians. It was not a cohesive thing, like APO or the Cowboys or the Spurs.

DSG: Was the students' attitude generally supportive of the government, say when it tended to come under fire? Did they tend to support it, or did they say, "Well, maybe we shouldn't have student government?"

MADDEN: Well, I wouldn't say that it was supportive, because usually, political figures end up supporting themselves. It's difficult to get the electorate really involved in supporting a person in public office; but I don't recall any moves to get rid of student government.

DSG: Why was the presidency changed in mid-term? Wilson Foreman served the latter part of the school year...

MADDEN: I had decided that I was pretty serious about getting married, and needed to finish law school; I had talked to Wilson when we ran, that in all probability I would only want to serve a half a year, because I needed then to go on and finish. I was either pinned or engaged at the time.

DSG: Was there any objection to that by the students?

MADDEN: No. They were probably relieved to have Willie in there!

DSG: OK. Let me ask you a little bit about your term on the Board on the Board of Regents. You were on the Board from January 1959 to January 1965....

MADDEN: I was not out of the University very long when I was appointed to the Board of Regents.

DSG: What was your view of the student government during that time?

MADDEN: Well, now, I was the youngest regent ever appointed, and I think probably still am--I was thirty years old, or so. I still knew an awful lot of the faculty on the campus, and some of the students--those who had dropped out, or come back to law school. I felt very comfortable in that environment. The age disparity on the Board of Regents went from a couple regents who were great-grandparents to me, so you have a generation gap of several decades there. My attitude toward the students had not changed, basically, from when I was a student. I felt comfortable meeting with the editor of the Texan and the president of the student body and anyone else in any kind of forum, much to the consternation of several of my fellow regents who thought that I was always in a position of being trapped by the students, which I thought was a joke....

DSG: Was the campus government at that time relatively effective, or had things started to change? What kinds of changes did you see?

MADDEN: I think that at that time it was still relatively effective. The changes came at about the time I was going off the Board of Regents, insofar as the attitude of the "frustrated student," and the student who was more concerned with international issues that he wanted to translate into the college campus. I had been as a regents' representative to a conference at Berkeley, and spent several days on that campus, and I was really most impressed unfavorably with the attitude of the students on that campus. I came back and reported to our Board that we at Texas were going to experience some of these same movements that I saw in California, and we had better prepare ourselves for it. It was disruptive to the educational process at Berkeley, and would be ultimately in Austin also; hopefully, the basic attitudes of Texans would carry the University student body, but there would be outside people who would agitate and cause problems....

DSG: What would you consider to be the one or two outstanding accomplishments of the Madden administration?

MADDEN: As student body president?

DSG: As student body president.

MADDEN [laughing]: I can't think of any!

DSG: What kind of lasting mark did you leave...?

MADDEN: Oh, I left none.

DSG: Well, that's honest!

MADDEN: Oh, yes. It was a happy experience, and I believe that by taking the time to participate--and I wasn't really sure I wanted to run for that office, as my wife will tell you; I agonized over doing that...then and since then, I've been cast in a lot of public roles that I haven't particularly sought--and when I decided to do it, it was with the reservation that I probably would not want to serve the full term. I believe, though, by doing what I did, I encouraged other people to get involved in student politics. I know that was the case, because there have been many cases since then where I've had people say, "I was a freshman when you were student body president, and I was impressed with what you were doing, and what you all were trying to do, and I got involved," that type thing. But as far as lasting mementoes, I have none.

DSG: As a conclusion, let me ask you to look ahead at what you see for us now--what kind of prospects are there for our infant Students' Association? Do you think that student government is even a feasible kind of exercise on a campus approaching 50,000 people?

MADDEN: I think the prospects, once again, are as viable as those who are willing to work with it. I would hope that the students don't become too obsessed with demanding fiscal control of things that they really don't originate: for instance, the student at the University of Texas pays what percentage of his educational cost today? Less than 10%, with no significant tuition increases since the mid-'60s. A student is a transitory person; the University exists because of the student, no question about that; and his role in his education and the experiences he gets out of the University is why we have colleges to begin with. But they were not, are not, and should not be in a position to make significant decisions of a financial nature in controlling where funds go in the University.

DSG: Even with such things as the Student Services Fee, which is entirely their money?

MADDEN: Well, it may be entirely their money, but the taxpayers pay the climbing cost of education, and I believe very firmly that the taxpayers of the State of Texas, through whatever representative process they have--right now, it's the Board of Regents, as appointed by the governor and approved by the Senate--those are the people who must be heard from in the allocation and distribution of money, because it's so dadgummed expensive to them. The students, I think, must realize that, although they pay the service fees, that is only a very small part of the overall cost of education.

DSG: That's what they're trying to control, or trying to get increased control of. Right now, they have some recommendation authority, but it's subject to change at the presidential level....

MADDEN: Yes; I understand what they would want to do, but I would still say what I said a moment ago: that that represents such a small part of

the cost of keeping that student there, that even though the student does pay that cost, the taxpayer of the State of Texas still is the person that keeps that student in school. And the overall operation of the University of Texas must be under the auspices of the Board of Regents and the administration. Now the students should, and I'm sure can, make recommendations and can argue with the persuasiveness allocated only to students, and that's proper, and should be. But the final decision doesn't necessarily rest with the students--in fact, it doesn't.

DSG: If our new president were to come in here today and sit down with you and say, "Mr. Madden, I'm trying to do the best job that I can; I'm trying to get the Students' Association on its feet, and make it a viable organization. What one suggestion could you give to me from your experience that would help me succeed?" What would you tell him?

MADDEN: I'd say, involve those people in whom you have a lot of confidence and who you know will do whatever function they're given to the very best of their ability, and have the personality and the character to in turn involve other people, and once again get students interested in a governmental process that will teach them to be better citizens in society. The fact that they may not be able to determine the expenditure of the student [services] fee really is no more restrictive than the checks and balances system in our government today.... I think it's the character and the personality of the people who lead that will get others involved.

## HARLEY CLARK

February 17, 1983

*Harley Clark held the position of Students' Association President during the years 1957-1958, near the end of what he called the "quiet, introspective" generation of student government nationwide. Clark was attending the School of Law during his tenure as president, and is today a Travis County District Court Judge. While his court was in recess from noon to 2 p.m., Judge Clark and I ate lunch together in his office, and then turned to the interview.*

DSG: You had a fairly extensive committee system, from what I've read--both standing committees and temporary, ad hoc ones. How was that organized, and how effective would you say it was?

CLARK: As I recall, the student body president appointed the chairman and the members, or at least the chairman, to the various standing committees and any committee that he would choose to create. I don't recall there being any restriction on the number or subject matter of the committees.... We conducted interviews. We would let it be known through the Texan and so forth that if you wanted to be on a student government committee, you should come by and be interviewed.... This was at a time...when the Student Union was restricted to the small building that it had; the Student Union was almost without funds, and student activities were very restricted. So if you wanted to be involved with something, you'd be involved with student government probably first, and maybe some of the Union activities secondarily, because they were not as important, and they were not funded well. They did not receive adult supervision and maintenance, like they do now. And as a result of that, it was quite an honor to be a chairman of a committee, or a vice-chairman; it was good to be on a committee; the various social organizations such as the fraternities and sororities and some independent organizations would deliberately send their people over to be interviewed to be on committees, and they would try to get their people on good committees, and that sort of thing.

DSG: Was there a big fraternity-independent rivalry at the time?

CLARK: Probably not as much as in the early '50s or late '40s, but there was still vestiges of it. There was a student party that was, as I remember, comprised mainly of the Greeks, and then there was a student party that was called the Student Party--that was my party--that was comprised mainly of independents and some Greeks.

DSG: You were an independent?

CLARK: Yes, I was an independent. But I think that by the time that I was student body president, that rivalry had lost some of the intensity that it had right after World War II, in that decade.

DSG: Were the parties fairly active? Or were they just a loose as-

sociation?

CLARK: Oh, they were really loose associations. We really did not do much. They did have nominating conventions, but they were largely run by a few people that were in student government anyway. The success of the party depended upon the attractiveness of the candidates at the top--president, vice-president, and secretary of the Students' Association--and they really did not have platforms that were anything but generalizations anyway....

DSG: Were the candidates listed by party on the ballot?

CLARK: I don't recall; I don't think so.

DSG: Could a candidate who wasn't in one of the parties get elected? Were there candidates who weren't affiliated?

CLARK: Good question; I don't recall.

DSG: It didn't seem like that received nearly the coverage in the Texan as it did in the 1940's.

CLARK: Yes. They were more important and more cohesive from the mid-'30s to the early '50s....

DSG: What was the role of the Freshman Council? Was it a branch of the student government, or was it an independent entity--how did it function in relation to the Students' Association?

CLARK: I think Freshman Council arose mainly from the dean's office, the dean wanting to use the Freshman Council as a means to integrate the freshmen into the University life. It had its own leaders that were elected by the freshman class, its own committees, and its own projects; but I don't think it was directly connected with student government as such.

DSG: Student government seemed at several times during the year to be making changes in the constitution of the Council, or its bylaws....

CLARK: I don't recall that, but that might be so. That wasn't something that I was particularly involved in during my time.

DSG: Did you find that a lot of the people who were coming in as new members of the student government were old members of the Freshman Council? Did it serve to stimulate interest in student governance?

CLARK: I believe so. Oftentimes, people who were interested in the Freshman Council and had obtained some sort of leadership position would move on into the upper-class world of "sure-enough" student government, the Students' Association. But you would also see freshmen start off with a real bang and then, in their sophomore or junior years, get interested in something else--studying, making good grades



and going on to med school or law school--and sort of drop out of the student activities world all together.

DSG: Was the amount of funding that you had for the machinery of the Association itself sufficient? You had about \$6,300, and your budget called for spending about \$5,800, for a \$500 surplus. Do you recall how it actually turned out?

CLARK: As I recall, we had enough money for at least our purposes. Looking back on it, there are many things that we could have done that we didn't even think of doing in that day. I don't think that we felt stymied on account of lack of funds. At that time, the Students' Association president was paid \$100 a month...it was a pretty big responsibility because of all the boards and committees and so on that year that the president or his designate served on.... We seemed to have money for whatever we devised for ourselves to do; I don't recall ever being particularly pinched for money....

.....  
Our funds, as I recall, came from a certain amount that had come out of the blanket tax...

DSG: Forty cents.

CLARK: Yes; and there was never any criticism by the students or the administration that we were taking too much, that we were so useless that we should get none. And as I recall, there were a good many years there where there was not a great deal of change in the budget of the Association itself or in the price of a blanket tax....

DSG: How would you evaluate the degree of student participation in the government? Were those who participated, both elected and appointed, motivated more by an ideal of serving the campus community by helping the machinery of self-government move along, or was it more of a--the word used nowadays is "resume-padding"--type thing?

CLARK: I think that there were people with both kinds of motivation. But I think that I would have to say, if I had to pick one as the predominant motivation, I would say it was the "resume-padding" type of motivation. Not that we felt or sensed that that was bad, but it was more the wanting to be involved in things that were pleasant to do. We were not a very controversial government; we did not antagonize many. We antagonized some, somewhat, but we didn't antagonize a lot of people, either students or administration, often. And we did not involve ourselves with worldly issues, to the extent that student government later came to involve itself with them. So from that, you have to assume that those who were involved were in it because they were either resume-padders, or it was a pleasant social activity. And it was fun, because we weren't passing resolutions on whether or not we should be in or out of some war--we just weren't in any wars; and we were not passing resolutions on abortion--that was an issue that was to come later. We were involved in integration. Almost everybody in the student government was pro-integration. But our issues were not those

of earthshaking moment. There were moments when we would get mad at the Legislature for what we would conceive as attempts to encroach upon academic freedom; we would be vocal about that sort of thing.

.....

But student government did, say in the late '50s or early '60s, begin to really address itself to issues that I think are really vitally important, at least they were at that time, to the students themselves, and became much more aggressive and vociferous than we were. So that leads me to believe that those who participated in student government back in my days were less revolutionaries and more people who were there because it was a generally pleasant atmosphere in which to work.

DSG: How was voter turnout while you were president? Was the student body at large pretty enthusiastic about the government also; did you find that they had a pretty high interest?

CLARK: Well, I don't recall percentages; to tell you the truth, I'm not sure that ever even occurred to me at the time. I don't know what the percentages were; that would be interesting to know. It seemed... that there was a generally positive acceptance for the student government; there wasn't any negativism, not much, anyway.

DSG: Students didn't tend to attack it when something went wrong?

CLARK: No. And I think maybe that the students at that time realized that the student government wasn't accountable and therefore didn't attack it.

DSG: It wasn't accountable?

CLARK: Well, it wasn't accountable for whatever it was that was bothering them at the moment; and, at that time, student government hadn't established for itself the right to speak out on, or attempt to make itself accountable for, a broad range of issues. I can remember attending a National Students' Association meeting in Ann Arbor, Michigan one summer in the late '50s, and the debate then--among national student leaders, from all over the United States--was "How far do you go?" So at that time, when I was student body president, we were still feeling our way as to what our appropriate place was. So, we didn't draw a lot of criticism. We didn't do much, and we didn't draw much criticism.

DSG: How would you describe your relationship with the Board of Regents?

CLARK: We didn't really have a working relationship.

DSG: Did you still have the Student-Regent Liaison Committee going on at that point? It was mentioned in the Cactus Yearbook....

CLARK: Well, if we had such a committee, I don't recall it doing much. The main liaison was between us and the president of the University

and someone immediately below him. There was a good bit of contact at that level.

DSG: You had an advisory council composed of some officers of the Association and some other people on campus....

CLARK: Yes. But mainly, back in those days, our job, just like the administration's job, was really just to keep the place moving, just keep it going, rather than changing things or trying to accomodate this group that wants something vs. this group that doesn't; it was just more of "let's keep the doors open, and let's make sure the place is functioning; let's make sure everyone's got a place to live; let's try to make sure that student housing is clean..."--it was more those kinds of problems than it was negotiating certain more direct types of interests with the administration.

DSG: When you did come to the administration, though, was it pretty receptive to what you had to say?

CLARK: Yeah, they were receptive; they would actually sit and listen to you. We did often present them with ideas about integration and so on, and they would from time to time come to us with ideas about integration. We were not the only movers and shakers trying to get the University integrated; there were those in the administration who were cautiously moving the University in that direction.... The University administration and the regents were not the knights in shining armor, dashing in front of the national group on integrating, but there were some good moments there. There were a few bad ones, but there were some good ones, too--from the Students' Association's standpoint and from the administration's standpoint.

DSG: Did the Students' Association have any kind of power as far as recommendations in non-student appointments at the University level, say academic deans, faculty members, etc.?

CLARK: No. No.

DSG: Did you ever attempt to have that kind of power?

CLARK: No, I don't recall that we ever attempted to get involved in that. And they didn't seem to be very interested in our business, either; they didn't seem to worry about who or what we did.... There was a student majority on the TSP Board of Directors; there were student members of the Athletic Council, appointed by the student body president; and there were members of the Students' Association that would be part of the Student-Faculty Cabinet, but they didn't deal with who got elected, who got which professorship, who got tenure, who got promoted to a deanship, who got to be a vice-president, or who became the president of the University, that sort of thing. We didn't need that.

DSG: Was your relationship with the faculty and staff pretty good on

that committee and otherwise?

CLARK: Yes, it was. I think that I can say that there was a good deal of admiration between the students and faculty. You remember, now, this is back in a time when Austin was a small town and the University was only 18,000 people; and looking back on it now, I can sort of see that it was sort of a pleasant, sleepy existence. There were not great, divisive, emotional-packed issues like we got during the sixties and seventies.

DSG: You were telling me earlier, while we were eating lunch, about the allocation of the blanket tax. That was handled by a subcommittee of the Assembly, and then submitted to the Assembly for review. Where did it go from there? Was that pretty much the final say, or was it subject to review, or subject to change?

CLARK: If it was subject to review by the dean's office, I was not aware of it.... Certainly it had to have been subject to his OK, but it seemed like it was rubber-stamped. As I recall, I think we carried the resolution over to Dean Nowotny, and he'd look it over and say, "Well, this looks pretty good," and that's the way it would be, and we'd go on about our business.

DSG: What was your relationship with Nowotny?

CLARK: Good. He was a very cautious person when it came to students; that is, he didn't push you to see your responsibilities differently than the way you were seeing them, even though [it] might have been better for you and worse for him. But he was tolerant, and was not like the picture some students had of deans looking huge and inspiring, willing to whip out punishment like, say, a first-grade teacher does--he was not like that.

DSG: The reason I ask is that another former president whom I interviewed, he preceded you by, oh, close to 20 years, told me that he couldn't work with Nowotny, because he was an independent and Nowotny was pro-fraternity, and he said he had his contact with the administration through the President and not through Dean Nowotny; whereas several people who were before and after that who were fraternity men told me "yes, Nowotny was our main contact."

CLARK: Well, Nowotny was my main contact; but I didn't sense that difference. Nowotny...if you wanted to do something that Nowotny did not want you to do, which could arise probably--I can see a situation very frequently--he could be obtuse, and difficult to get a commitment out of. And that might have been his way of putting you off, of discouraging you from doing something that he felt was not right. But I never got the feeling that he was stonewalling me; I never got the feeling he was helping me--it was just sort of, there he was. He was a pleasant enough human being to be with.

DSG: Do you think maybe he mellowed out a little bit?

CLARK: Yeah, could be.

DSG: Let me go back to the blanket tax for just a second...how important would you say that allocation power was to the Association?

CLARK: I think it was really important. See, you did not have to buy a blanket tax; you could buy one if you wanted to. But many of the students bought one because you got such a good deal on the athletic events, and you had the CEC program and all that sort of stuff. It was a good deal to let the government of the students decide, more or less, where the money was going to go.... I can't imagine having a government without some way to obtain from the citizens of it money, to be used by the government to do the things that it perceives the people want the money to be spent on. And so that gave us this mock, if not real, sensation of having responsibility for the money. Part of teaching people what government is about is creating a situation where they can have the sensation of being responsible, if not the actuality. That's how you teach people. So, in that sense, Nowotny handled that well.... And we handled it well, too; we did not try to give a bunch of money to something that would have been inappropriate, at least at that time. So I suppose that they felt comfortable leaving those kinds of decisions with us.

If student government today is deprived of a way to tax its citizens, so to speak, it's just nonsensical.... Otherwise, you're really not training your student leaders in a very important aspect of student leadership, or leadership of any sort.

DSG: You mentioned before about integration being a major issue on campus. What other sorts of campus-related issues did the Association concern itself with--what were the main ones, that you recall?

CLARK: Well, there was the matter of editorial freedom in the Texan... freedom of the Texan was really important to us. There was integration, and academic freedom. Other than those three social issues, I'd call them, I don't recall any others.

DSG: Let me refresh your memory a bit...at one point, the Association donated \$1000 from the Eyes of Texas Copyright Fund to help get the FM radio station started. There was the work on married student housing...and freshman orientation.

CLARK: Yes, freshman orientation did get started. It turned into a good program for a good many years..., mainly because of the students pushing it and the kind of people we got into the Dean of Student Life's staff five or six years later.

We wanted some housing for married students, and we kept pressing the University to see that some were built that were better than the Deep Eddy-Brackenridge apartments. Those were already out there. I think that eventually came to pass; there are now several units around that are designed for married students themselves. At that time, there were a good many older students who were on campus. Back in those days,

see, people did not live together, and if you were married, you were older--always. There were not young married people on campus, below 21. That was really a rare situation. So, if a person was married, and he were to have a cheap place to live, like a single student, the University needed to pay attention and provide at least some housing that was as cheap, in comparison, as a place where a single student could live.

DSG: And that happened on initiative from the Students' Association?

CLARK: Well, I better not claim credit for that one; I think that was a long process. I can't really tell if that came about because of our efforts or not. But we were definitely interested in it; we were pushing for it.... That was a good project.

Now, the radio station.... A communications professor wanted to get the FM station going, and saw to it that the University got all the necessary permits and all that sort of thing, and sold us on what a great idea it would be for the University students to have a radio station; it sounded wonderful. So we donated our money; it didn't cost much money, as I remember, to get the thing [on the air]....

DSG: Is that what became KUT-FM?

CLARK: I believe so. I believe that's right. But that's a good example of how a faculty member with a good idea could come to the student government and get some cooperation. And we even actually had a little money, you know.... So that's the kind of thing that a student government with a little money can do to help a faculty member with a good idea; it was a great idea he had. I can remember that I wanted the Students' Association to have as much sway over the radio station as it did over Texas Student Publications, but the administration didn't buy that....

DSG: One of the later student constitutions said that one of the purposes of student government was to allow students "participation in the overall policy- and decision-making process of the University." You were talking a little about how much input the Students' Association had with the administration. But were you ever able to initiate any kind of action on student-related administrative policy decisions?

CLARK: I can remember attempting the introduction of the honor system to the University; that was one of my pet projects. They had the honor system at the law school, and it seemed reasonable and intelligent to have an honor system for the undergraduates. Back then, the Students' Association president, maybe with the consent or advice of others, appointed a bunch of students to a pool of names that the dean would draw on when disciplinary problems would come up; we had these disciplinary boards of a couple of faculty members, a couple of students, and one person from the Dean of Student Life, sort of sit as a "did-you-do-it-or-did-you-not-do-it" kind of board...and a lot of that had to do with cheating. I liked to serve on those, and it seemed to me like we could do two things: one, we could put the responsibility for

regulating ourselves completely on ourselves if we had an honor system, and secondly, if we had an honor system, we could force the professors to give us the kinds of quizzes that you couldn't cheat on, which would be a good thing for us academically--if we had to write them out, not true/false and that kind of thing, where it really wouldn't help you much to cheat--I thought that they were preferable in terms of teaching. So I caused a resolution to be presented to the Student Assembly that we encourage the administration to adopt such a system--but it didn't pass the Student Assembly, to my great dismay and surprise. I had not done my lobbying.

So the answer to your question is yes, we thought we could have substantial influence on certain types of academic policies within the administration. That was one where I obviously thought we could have an influence.

DSG: One thing I noticed in the minutes was a resolution that was introduced in the spring to ask the regents and the administration for an undergraduate library, because the library in the Main Building was dark and not conducive to study, and so forth. And then two weeks later another resolution was introduced thanking the regents and the administration for their prompt cooperation! I did a double-take.... Was that really due to the efforts of the Students' Association, or was it something that they had already been considering? How much impact did the Association have in that decision?

CLARK: I don't think a lot. I think that Dr. [Harry] Ransom was really interested in the undergraduate library taking place and being built, and that a young guy...in the student government got fascinated with the idea. I don't really know what the regents or the administration had done as a result of our request, but that may have been one of those situations where...somebody in the administration, like Dr. Ransom, was sort of using us: "Hey, why don't you all pass a resolution and let's send it up to the regents" to show that here's somebody else that wants it, out of this big packet of reasons and resolutions and letters--that may have been the way that worked.... What you see there might have been the culmination of several years' working, lobbying, and so on.

DSG: How was the Association involved in off-campus affairs--city, state politics, legislative lobbying--and also your role in the NSA?

CLARK: We were members of the NSA and we were pretty active in that. We did not participate, as I recall, hardly at all in city decisions or politics. We would from time to time be involved in things happening down at the Legislature like tuition increases and that sort of thing. We'd go down and lobby, terribly ineffectively; as I look back on it, just awfully. But, we'd go down there anyway.

By way of integration activities, some of us would be involved in going to other Southern campuses, organizing students, trying to get them to do things either at their capitols or at their campuses to foster integration. We did a lot of that.

I was always a little bit frustrated, because I never could get

really seriously going on the National Students' Association; it seemed like it was just sort of a bunch [?] of meetings and talking about what should be done, rather than "here is what we are going to do...". And of course, my campus government was not activist in the sense that they were a decade later, but I can certainly recognize that other organizations were more prone to get together and talk about the nature of things than they were to step out. So insofar as our relationship to the NSA was concerned, I always felt like it was a bit of a waste of time, because most of the student governments that were involved in the NSA were less developed than we were. I mean, we were right at the top of a very strong student government as far as United States universities were concerned....

So there wasn't much that I was going to gain from NSA; and we were absolutely pathetic when coming to dealing with the Legislature; and we had almost nothing to do with city government.

.....

DSG: How much of an official "voice" for the opinion of the student body did the Association provide, first of all in your view?

CLARK: I think we were a pretty good voice; I think we were a pretty representative voice.

DSG: What about from the point of view of the average student who probably knows that there is a student government, is dimly aware of its existence, perhaps--did he see it as his voice, representing him to the administration and so forth?

CLARK: I don't know about that, but I would say that the ideas and values and the degree of intensity with which we would state something fairly well represented the general viewpoint and tenor of the campus at that time. Now whether or not the little guy, the little student, would recognize us as his voice, I don't know about that. But I think I can pretty safely say that our outlook and our degree of passion and the things that interested us was pretty representative of most of the people on campus at that time.

DSG: Did the administration see the Association as the official voice of the students?

CLARK: I think so.

DSG: Did it carry a lot of weight?

CLARK: I think it did. What weight they gave the students, if any, was given by them to us.

DSG: Did the students seem to perceive that they were self-governed, as much as a student body can be self-governed--did they have a feeling of "belonging" to "their" Students' Association?

CLARK: Oh, I like to believe so; but I'm not sure. In any sort of organization that I've ever been in, there's always been this concern



for those on the outside--do they realize that we are their representatives? How is it that we can include them in more details of our business? And that was certainly true of student government in those days; it's true of the Austin City Council today; it's true of the governor's office today; it's true of the President's office today: how can we include our constituency and make them feel like that we are their government and we are responsible to them. There's two motivations for that--one is preservation; you can eliminate enemies if you make them feel like they're part of your deal; and the other is a sincere desire and an appropriate response that it is necessary for people to be involved in their governmental institutions in order to prevent the kind of citizens that could bring governments down from existing.

So, I think that we were willing people to be more aware and participate more; but, you know, when you get right down to it, there's just a limit to how much people can participate in. We've seen experiments in broad, participatory democracy; you could just have endless meetings...until everybody just gets tired and walks off. So those kinds of things did interest us, but how well we were able to pass along the idea that we were the representatives of all the students? I don't know. I don't know if we were really more successful than anybody else has been, or will be.

DSG: In addition to those things you've already mentioned, was there anything else that occurred 1957-1958, either on campus or off, that you think was significant to your administration?

CLARK: I think that, looking back on it, I do believe that generations have a general characteristic. That doesn't mean that there aren't some types in all generations; but I believe that our generation was very introspective--we were pretty quiet. We weren't terribly materialistic, but we were really concerned with human rights and general freedoms. We somehow missed sensing the right to be more outspoken about certain things; we were shy in that regard. But looking back on it, I don't see that it was directly our fault; for many of us, there was something that was just a limit beyond which you did not go if you were going to be appropriately respectful of your superiors. In a sense that hampered some of our potential effectiveness. And the reason I talk about that is that I think it's a pretty striking contrast between us and, say, the students that came along a decade later, who were very outspoken and had almost no respect for those in charge of an administration, at colleges all over the United States, not only this college, but Berkeley, Cornell, NYU, and so on....

I think that student governments are going to reflect those kinds of generational attitudes, and I think that we reflected ours pretty faithfully. So that may serve as a limiting factor in what we were brave enough to set up for ourselves to accomplish.... Our timidity was at least understandable.... I'm fascinated with that whole idea of generational characteristics.... That is where real government is...; what governs you is your attitudes, values, ethics, and aesthetics. I believe that much more deeply today than I did 25 years ago.

.....

DSG: What would you consider to be the one or two most outstanding accomplishments of the Clark Administration? What lasting mark did you leave?

CLARK: I can't think of any. I really can't. And I don't feel a sense of failure on that account. I can't think of anything in particular....

DSG: OK; let me ask you to look ahead a little bit. What prospects do you see now for our infant Students' Association? Is it even a feasible thing, having a representative type government on a campus of almost 50,000 people?

CLARK: Sure, it's certainly feasible; probably desirable. How much responsibility you will have will be partly due to how much the administration wants to turn loose and let students have; and it's going to be partly due to how much responsibility the students want to urge on the administration to have themselves; and how much they can find to do for themselves. But I would say that so long as the Students' Association doesn't have a way to obtain funds, it's going to be a debating society; not that that's bad, but that's about what it's going to be, if that. I think that for the student government to have any chance at performing the function that I think a student government on campus has, insofar as teaching the students how to manage things-- if it's going to have any chance at all for the University to get that benefit out of a student government, then the University's going to have to let the students have some money to play with, and the University's going to have to be tolerant if the students don't spend the money just the exact same way that the University would have them spend it.

DSG: If I brought our new president in here today, and he said to you, "Judge Clark, I'm really trying to make student government work; I'm trying to get it off the ground. What suggestions would you give me in that regard?", what would you tell him?

CLARK: Find a way to raise money, either an activity that creates money for you, or talk somebody into giving it to you, like the administration.

DSG: On a regular basis?

CLARK: Sure, if you can. We could go the administration and say, "Let us be responsible for the administration of specific project X, and in return for that, you need to give us a little money." You either go very task oriented, very specific, or "Please give us some money and let us spend it on our own." And they might say no, and then you say, "Well, what's the matter? Don't you give YOUR kids money? Are you afraid your kids don't know how to spend money? How do you expect me to grow up and be responsible if I don't have money to play with? Don't you want me to grow up and be responsible? I might make a few mistakes; are you afraid that I, the little student,

am going to embarrass you, Mr. Big University? You think we're going to bring you to your knees? Give us 10,000 bucks."

## LOWELL LEBERMANN

February 23, 1983

*As was the case for many other interviewees, the student body presidency was a stepping-stone for Lowell Lebermann to larger political arenas. Lebermann, who held the post from April 1962 until August of that same year, earned a B.A. in History from the University, and went on to build successful businesses in real estate, oil, gas, and general investments and banking in Austin. He served on the Austin City Council from 1971 to 1977; he has also been State Attorney General and a candidate for governor. Extremely active in Democratic politics, Lebermann was tri-coordinator for the Carter/Mondale reelection effort and a co-chair of Business People for Carter/Mondale; most recently, he worked on the election campaigns of Governor Mark White, Lt. Governor Bill Hobby, and U.S. Senator Lloyd Bentsen. At the time that I talked with him, Lowell Lebermann was again prominently in the public eye as he campaigned for mayor of Austin. With the election only slightly more than a month away, there was a furor of activity at Lebermann For Mayor Headquarters, where we met for the comparatively calm interview.*

DSG: What was the role of the political parties on campus during the beginning of your term--how they functioned in your election, were you affiliated with a party, and what role they played in the elections and in the Assembly?

LEBERMANN: Political parties on the campus pre-dated my involvement in student government by many years. I was a member of a party; the names of the parties tended to change, and parties merged and went away and came back and so forth. I chaired the Representative Party until moments before my nomination as student body president, whereupon of course I resigned, and then, naturally, I was an independent [laughing] because the Rep Party was comprised largely of Greek social organizations and, although that worked well from an organizational standpoint--they were all ongoing organizations that could provide people and continuity and the rest--they still were an astute minority of the student body, even at that time; less so than today, but they were not political. So the student independents' party, the Student Party, was regarded as the more progressive of the two.

DSG: So you ran as an independent so you would get to vote as an independent, basically?

LEBERMANN: Well, so I could get elected. The support of a party was no assurance of election, although you had to have it. The fact is that philosophically, I was substantially more liberal than most of friends and colleagues from the Greek system. Example: I was president of the University YMCA...and it was a philosophical and activist student organization, one of the few organizations on the campus that was regarded as a campus-wide organization and certainly an entry-level organization from which to move into and up through student government.

So I was saying that from a philosophical point of view, translating that into the getting of votes, I wanted to be positioned slightly left of center, because I had a tremendous amount of support from the Student Party, and that was dividing it up pretty well, as will be witnessed by the fact that I won in a vigorous three-way race without a runoff.

DSG: Even so, though, the Rep Party managed to carry every seat that they ran a candidate in in the Assembly.

LEBERMANN: That's right; they had the strength and the money and the organization and the people to be able to map a major campaign at every level, and that was one of their great advantages.

DSG: How did the parties function once the candidates were elected? Did they tend to die out somewhat; were they mainly an election machine, or was there an active party rivalry in the Assembly?

LEBERMANN: No, there was a fairly active party rivalry in the Student Assembly when the Student Party had been successful enough to have strong representation there. The parties, however, tended to be on-going; certainly the Rep Party did for a number of years.

DSG: You told me earlier that you had resigned in late August, just before the start of the fall session.

LEBERMANN: Yes.

DSG: What were the reasons for that?

LEBERMANN: Academic reasons; you had to maintain a certain grade point average for 12 hours, I believe it was--that's no longer the case and wasn't for very long after I left. I flunked a history course for lack of paying attention to it and lost the appeal, so I had to resign the post.

DSG: How was the Association funded? You were still on an allocation from the blanket tax?

LEBERMANN: Yes, that's right.

DSG: Was that a sufficient amount, the total that you got from the sale of blanket taxes?

LEBERMANN: Yeah, that worked pretty nicely. We had some other funds, as I remember; I think we shared, if not then, then somewhat later, in revenues from some of the vending machines through the Ex-Students' Association, and in addition to that we had some funding from the then Chancellor's Office--the terms president and chancellor were sort of interchangeable, in a sense; Harry Ransom was President and Chancellor of the University of Texas System all at once.

DSG: Was the funding ever held over the Students' Association's head by the administration to get them to do anything--threaten to cut off your funding, or anything like that?

LEBERMANN: No, not at that time; it happened later. That threat was certainly more or less reoccurring as far as the TSP Board and the Daily Texan were concerned. --'Cause they misbehaved so much, you see [laughing].

DSG: And student government didn't.

LEBERMANN: Oh, no.

DSG: Barbara Tosch wrote in an editorial in October of '62--this would be after you had already stepped down--she levels pretty harsh criticism at the Association and she said that one of the Assembly representatives had described his colleagues as "mechanical dolls--you wind them up and they nitpick for two semesters." Somebody else said, "I think it's all a bunch of crap. Nobody does anything except make a fool of himself...they don't debate the issues; they just argue personalities." The thrust of the whole article was that it was mostly a lot of interpersonal arguing more than eventually getting anything done. Did you get that feeling from the time that you viewed the Assembly?

LEBERMANN: Well, I never really served on the Assembly; my activity was through the committee structure of student government. I chaired a thing called the Grievance Committee, which my friend and current colleague Mr. Frank Cooksey, who had been student body president three years before I, appointed me to as a sophomore; and then I went on to the Y, rose up through those ranks, and then ran directly for student body president.... I shared Barbara Tosch's view to some extent, although her way of going was always somewhat more extreme of language and position than my own. I thought that a good many things came out of the lively debates of the Assembly; some of the students were really bright, understood the mechanisms of government and used them, understood the function of budgeting as a prioritization of policy and used it, and it was good. But as student body president, of course, there's almost always a quasi-adversarial between the legislative body and the executive office, and that was certainly true when I was there.

DSG: Would you say that the elected and appointed representatives on committees and so forth were there more to help the machinery of student government move along, or were they in it to do kind of what we would today call "resume-padding"?

LEBERMANN: Well, that's hard to say. The reasons for it are as varied as the personnel involved; some believed deeply in the function of student government (I'll touch on that in just a minute), and others of course were just active students looking for co-curricular involvements in the environment in which they found themselves, and probably many of them are still doing just that today--they're very much involved in

their neighborhoods, churches, local governments, school boards.

There was a big debate at that time that was coming down from the national level through state associations of student governments and to the major campuses particularly...that made up the National Student Association. NSA was highly controversial, and some people thought of the members as subversive. Remember, we were just coming out of the '50s--the McCarthy era and all the bad air. So there was a big debate over the concept of "Students in Their Role as Students"--what did that mean? Were student governments to take on the never-ending, cyclical kinds of issues of parking on campus, student publications, funding of student government, dormitory matters of hours, curfews, some academic stuff--you know, that kind of thing: campus issues that simply revolved around the campus community as such; or, were we to be participants in the wider community? Were we to discuss issues of war and peace, of nuclear power; were we to talk about issues in the broader communities in which our universities found themselves? And strangely enough, that was really a fairly vigorous kind of debate--where should our emphasis be? I tended to come down just on the side of students in their role as students in a narrower way; some of my views would absolutely be laughable today, because students certainly view the wider world as their stage. And they should. That was just an emerging idea at the time, that we could, as students, come together in a homogeneous group and have some influence; it was only just being examined. Of course, later in the '60s, obviously, we all know what happened then; student groups were the core of the anti-war protests.

So, I viewed student government as a information gathering and recommendatory function. Before I had come on board, there had been tremendous adversarial energies expended between the administration and student government; I didn't feel like that was a very effective mechanism. As a result, I worked very closely with Harry Ransom, whom I admired excessively, to get things done, and to have the student government and the student leaders work with him and the administration. Where our disagreements took place were in his offices and the halls of debate and discussion rather than the student newspaper and on the quadrangles. I thought it was very effective; some kind of revolutionary things were happening in the student life community--the Undergraduate Library was just being built at that time. Interestingly enough, that institution had tremendous influence: it was open stack concept for undergraduates, and the questions like how long would it be open...what influence did that have on curfew matters, how did that impact the dormitories and...the student organizations maintaining houses and the like. Well, it had tremendous impact; a lot of decisions had to be made.

.....

Through those kinds of very closely husbanded organizations, husbanded by the administration because the notion of 'in loco parentis' was still much with us at the time, we could affect the lives very directly of all the students who were here. Of course, at that time, there were 18,500 when I entered to 22 or 23,000 when I left....

DSG: So your relationship with the administration was pretty good,

then.

LEBERMANN: It was very good.

DSG: Through personal interaction with Dr. Ransom.

LEBERMANN: With Dr. Ransom and various student life deans and the academic deans.

DSG: How about with the Board of Regents? When I talked to Wales Madden, he told me that when he was president the regents always invited him and any other students who wanted to come to meetings to do so and to have input into the regents. In your records, there was a letter from him also inviting student participation on regents' committees and so forth.

LEBERMANN: Yes, we did some of that; I met with the regents a time or two before I became student body president and afterwards. But then as now, my orientation was one of consensus government--to work with the regents instead of in apposition at all times--seemed to me to be the most useful, as it did with the administration. That's not to say that you couldn't well and effectively divide out and take them on when you really actively disagreed on something of substance. But you didn't do it, from my point of view (and Wales shares this), as a matter of regular strategy. All of that kind of confrontational politics between the students and administrators was more for the aggrandizement of students in their own view, I would think, than anything else--then as now.

DSG: What about the Association's relationship with the faculty and staff, on those committees that you served with them on? How did they view the Association?

LEBERMANN: Well, some of the older heads regarded the Association in a rather patronizing kind of way--it was something that had to be coped with and dealt with; it was just a regular problem that was a part of their duties. The newer, fresher, crisper, more forward looking, open types were more anxious to deal with us on a substantive basis and were more promotive of our ideas and our structure and our goals and the rest.

DSG: The Association still at this point controlled the allocation of the blanket tax; it was subject to some sort of review at a higher level. Was that pretty much a rubber stamp kind of review, or did you operate knowing the possibility that it might be changed?

LEBERMANN: Well, that was always a possibility, that it might be changed if the policies that were funded by student dollars ran contrary to the general policy. It was subject to change, and that was the battleground for vigorous debate from time to time.

DSG: There was, at the end of '63, when they were doing the allocation for '63-'64, a time when they temporarily suspended funding to the band



and the athletic department pending investigation of their integration policies. Do you recall that?

LEBERMANN: Yes, I do.

DSG: How influential was that power of the purse, as it were?

LEBERMANN: Well, it had maximum influence; it had genuine economic impact, point one, and that's influential as hell. In addition to that, it had major symbolic impact, and was much covered and debated in the press. And so it focused the judgement of the Students' Association and the contra-view of the regents on issues of the day that needed debate.

DSG: And then they later gave them the money?

LEBERMANN: Yes, that's correct.

DSG: We were talking about integration; that seemed to be one of the biggest campus-related issues that the Association addressed itself to during '62-'63...

LEBERMANN: And before. '60-'61, it was pretty vigorous on Guadalupe and in the private sector. The Nighthawk took the lead in integrating its restaurants on the Drag and citywide, and if you can imagine that in such a short time as that, integration issues were being taken care of--that being '60-'61, and this being '83. But I was extremely active, as were most of my colleagues, particularly from the YIMCA and YWICA, which doesn't have the influence or the participation that it once did, but we're talking about a committee structure and program structure involving hundreds of students, at that time. So we could mobilize a lot of energy on any given topic.

.....  
DSG: The students were pretty effective, then, in being the campus leaders as far as getting the campus integrated.

LEBERMANN: No question about it.

DSG: How was the Association involved in off-campus affairs during the '62-'63 school year--city and state politics, lobbying the Legislature, and so forth? It seems that this is just about the dawn of students beginning to exert some influence off-campus.

LEBERMANN: Well, there was a good deal of student involvement before Legislative committees, particularly as it related to the bi-annual budget process and the imposition of fees. It was a matter of great concern then as now. And the students would mobilize and vigorously protest any increase in tuition at the Legislative level and at the regental level.

DSG: Was there any other kind of participation...

LEBERMANN: Yeah, the whole integration issue was attacked from the

bi-annual budgetary process vantage point as well. In other words, if they don't effectively integrate in the academic as well as the co-curricular things that I've mentioned, then the funding should be withheld. There was a lot of discussion along those lines, provided by the students.

DSG: There was also something that I recall from the very beginning of the school year, around September, when the Assembly sent a couple of telegrams to the University of Mississippi. The coverage wasn't real explicit, but it seemed that there was a Black student who was trying to get in, and they wouldn't let him in.... There was a lot of debate in the Assembly about wording these telegrams and whether students should even be involved in this kind of thing, off-campus.

LEBERMANN: Well, that's the students-in-their-role-as-students issue once again. The question was one of appropriateness; the issue would not even be debated today, would it? But it was then. I cannot remember the student's name at Ole Miss; he went on to become a congressman, ultimately.

DSG: There was a lot of stuff in there about sympathy with the student body at Ole Miss; what was going on--were there some kind of disturbances, or something?

LEBERMANN: Oh, yes; there was a bit of big confrontational vigor over there, with a big raid on their old main building, all that. It was kind of Alabama revisited.

DSG: But your personal feeling at the time was that that was a proper role for the Association, or was not?

LEBERMANN: Certainly as between universities and between student bodies, and their expressing concern, I thought that was entirely appropriate. My problem was, should the Student Assembly, funded by students to do student kinds of things and address student issues, spend time and money and its good name and influence, if any, on more global issues, like peaceful uses of nuclear power, or congressional matters relating to things non-educational? That kind of thing troubled me at the time. It wouldn't today; I'd be pleased with that stuff.

DSG: In your view, would you say that the Association provided an effective, official "voice" for student opinion?

LEBERMANN: It absolutely depended on the personalities, in combination with the issues and the treatment of those issues, at the time. If a student body president and vice-president and secretary and Assembly acted thoughtfully, responsibly, then they could act as strongly as they wanted to. If they permitted themselves the luxury of...histrionics, then impotency ensued.

DSG: Which was the general case, do you think, in '62-'63?

LEBERMANN: Oh, I thought we acted pretty darn responsible.

DSG: Take the same question from the point of view of the average, rank-and-file student, if such a thing exists--the person who's not real involved, if at all, in student government. How did he view the Students' Association? Did he see it as being his official "voice" on and off-campus?

LEBERMANN: I think that probably the student body as a whole, remembering that, then as now, we have a strong mix of graduate-level people--never mind the law school, because it always participated more actively than any of the graduate schools in student politics, as lawyers do in the broader society--the fact is that there was an awful lot of skepticism about student government, then as now. Not to the same extent; there wasn't the level of skepticism about anything then as there is now. It was perhaps a somewhat simpler time.... I would suggest that yes, there was skepticism; people turned it aside with a wave of the hand, saying it was not effective, didn't amount to anything, was largely ignored. That's been true on college campuses, I think, particularly ones as diverse as ours, for a long time. It also, of course, depended on the personalities of the administration: if they took it seriously and responded to it in an open kind of way, so it was widely known that student leaders of the time had influence, then of course that feeling was more permeable than at times when the administration would stop. That had an awful lot to do with the atmosphere of impact and effectiveness.

On balance, a higher percentage of the student body voted and participated, in the committee structure of the Texas Union, in student government and the committee structures there, in the honorary and spirit organizations, etc., than the percentages that appear today.

DSG: OK; let me ask you again the same question from the point of view of the administration: did they see the Students' Association as representing the official voice of the student body?

LEBERMANN: As official as there was, yeah. There was no other formal structure...

DSG: Kind of by default?

LEBERMANN [laughing]: Well, I'd like to think that it was a little more substantive than that; but there were no other students that had offered themselves for election and had either been elected or denied, and so forth, than the Students' Association. They recognized leadership from the elected board of the Texas Union; the "Y" was an off-campus, though recognized organization, and noisy, so those students were heard one way or another, and then of course there was, as ever, the Texan....

DSG: Let me ask you again to evaluate the efficacy of the Students' Association while you were on the City Council during the '70s, during a very active and sometimes volatile time for student government at Texas. How was the Association viewed by those, say, in City politics?

LEBERMANN: Well, we courted student organizations like the UT YD's; there were some other sort of ad hoc student activist progressive organizations, and we went after their leadership; we spent time with student body presidents and other perceived student officials and student leaders, both elected and not. We were very concerned about all the formal and informal mechanisms by which students could be reached at that time, because students listening and acting and reacting--very much involved in municipal governmental affairs at the time.

DSG: There was frequently an opinion expressed, particularly in the mid-'70s, that the Students' Association was much more liberal than the student body as a whole, and it really didn't represent the student body....

LEBERMANN: I think that's true.

DSG: Did the City Council see it that way?

LEBERMANN: Yes; I believe it would have had to have been viewed in that way, because it was perceptibly so. Another reason was that it was during the middle '70s, when the demographics of the campus began to change, and the populations in Liberal Arts and Humanities were diminishing, while Engineering and Business were on the substantial increase. And you might reasonably ask, "Well, what does that mean?" Well, it's very reflective of attitudes on the campus about the point of being here and where you're going afterwards, and that has an awful lot to do with how you spend your time while you are here. Surely it's a much more passive, much more conservative campus than it was in the middle '70s and certainly in the late '60s.

DSG: Did that take away somewhat from the power of the Association?

LEBERMANN: Yes, I think it did take away from the power and the focus of student government. And it was at that time too, of course, that all these cartoon-style people were running for student government, and they were really yukking it up, and the whole point was to poke fun at it while they were running, and so forth.

DSG: What do you think caused the abolition in '78?

LEBERMANN: Well, in the first place, no one was paying enough attention to vote and to participate. Nobody cared, and there is a point at which it is not proper or wise for an entity to have public dollars available to it or for it to spend those dollars unless it is demonstrably representative in some way. So I think it just became so vestigial that it didn't have sufficient influence to merit going on.

DSG: Yet the students came out in relatively large numbers to vote to abolish it. Even those that didn't usually vote must have felt...

LEBERMANN: ...That it was a nonsensical exercise. They wanted to sweep it away.

DSG: What do you see ahead for us? ... What prospects do you see for the Association? Is student government even a workable exercise on a campus of almost 50,000 people?

LEBERMANN: Yes, I think it is. The student college councils are a good mechanism for feeding individuals and groups into the broader student government kind of arena. And I think that because of this kind of activity at the specific college level, as a base or pool, if you will, of interested people, the Students' Association can survive and can flourish in this kind of environment. And they can get back a bit more to a narrower view of students in their role as students: interface and interact with the administration on academic issues, on matters of curricula, on faculty matters--the evaluation system, and all that, student life activities--the Texas Union is such an expanded thing over what it once was, and all of the programmatic activities that go on on a campus as lively and as urbane as ours can be affected by students and should be molded by students: speakers' programs and special seminars and interdisciplinary matters that really should be impacted by the students who are being shaped and molded by them.

So I see a big, expanded, and exciting role for student government if it moves in that direction instead of into expending its energies into the broader community through partisan politics and national kinds of issues that the students, as a whole, I think, don't want to be being messed with as far as their student government is concerned. They read the paper; they can make up their own minds; they can be Democrats or Republicans or Independents--they can do all those kinds of things, and I think that if student government will pay attention to student government's affairs, that it will be a very viable entity and will be taken seriously by the administration and the Board of Regents and can go forward in a meaningful kind of way.

DSG: In other words, concentrate on campus-related affairs.

LEBERMANN: Yeah, in the most serious kind of way: participate in dean selection committees, curricular matters; and through the faculty-student combined structures on campus they can really be effective.

DSG: A final question: If our new president, who will be elected in a couple weeks, were to come here and sit down with you and say, "Mr. Lebermann, look back to your experience in student government and tell me what one or two pieces of advice you could give me to help me get it off the ground, help me make it work," what would you tell him?

LEBERMANN: Well, I would tell him some of the things that I have just said. I would say to single out the most responsible and responsive students that he or she could in the various colleges, and bring them together in informal discussion sessions so that they can be more or less of one mind as far as the focus of student government. That's the thing: there needs to be goal-setting and quantifiable results.

They need to get to know central administration, and they need to get to know key faculty people who have influence in the Faculty Senate and the rest. Many things are happening on this campus with regard to the future of the campus, from an academic point of view, and they need to know, for example, what the Centennial Commission of The University of Texas is coming up with in their soon-to-be-released document; they need to understand what influences will emerge from the recommendations of that body, and what it means to students, both present and future, and be able to start to work to influence how those goals and recommendations will be put in place at the legislative, regental, and administrative levels.

These are real issues of substance; this isn't parking, about which we can do very little except to continue to try to find some manner of transportation system over there; it doesn't have a lot to do with ticket distribution and the like in Memorial Stadium, although those kinds of issues need to be continually addressed. But I'm talking about really getting down on the issues of substance that will matter today and for way into the future. I would tell him to put together formal and informal mechanisms to communicate the potential for impact on behalf of the students.

## JOHN ORR

April 4, 1983

*The 1965-1966 term of John Mack Orr as Students' Association President saw dramatic social and political changes come to the University campus. Students sought an increasing role in administrative policy decision-making, while student participation in the government, as measured by voter turnout, fell to its lowest point in several years. Frank Erwin was rising to power, while the Board of Regents attempted to censor the liberal Daily Texan. Integration of off-campus businesses and dormitories remained a controversial subject, as Orr presided over what he called the "last peaceful year" before violence began to erupt on campus.*

*John Orr, an attorney specializing in business litigation with the Houston-based law firm of Fulbright and Jaworski, recently returned from that city to Austin, and we met in his new office.*

DSG: You had a fairly extensive proposed restructuring of the Association; you had a new constitution that was introduced, and so on. What was the reason for that?

ORR: There was a group of us, including myself, who thought that the student government would never have, and could not have in light of state government and the society that we live in, formal powers akin to government at the state, local, or national level; and that therefore, the thinking needed to be changed as to how representation should be chosen--that the idea of one person, one vote, those kinds of concepts...were simply not appropriate. We felt that, rather, it ought to be interest groups on campus; that they ought to be represented to get people involved so that various ideas could be generated and channeled to the official governing body of the University, the administration and the Board of Regents, who are the only ones who have the legal power to take actions. And we felt that for that to be legitimate, it had to be representative of the various interest groups around the University.

DSG: Is that what led to the House of Delegates, the next year?

ORR: Yes.

DSG: So the new constitution was actually ratified the year after you were president.

ORR: Yeah; the concept that we ought to get away from thinking about power and authority and things that were never going to be, and little mini city or state governments, which were not realistic, and going to representation of interest groups and trying to involve key people in the various interest groups, wherever they might be around the University. Particularly, the University of Texas is made up of a fairly diverse group of people. And getting that basic concept across was very difficult, and toward the end I think there was a tremendous amount

of frustration; I'm not sure if that concept was ever truly agreed with by a large enough segment of the population of the University to be successful. It kind of got halfway done.

DSG: Had you intended to replace the Assembly with the House of Delegates, or was it supposed to be in addition to the elected representatives?

ORR: I really don't recall...

DSG: Because it ended up being in addition to--bicameral.

ORR: I think that was probably a compromise. You had the problem that certain groups said, "We've got 2000 students; we ought to have more..."; it was broken up by colleges, but so often the colleges did not represent an interest group--much like, in the United States, we elect people from districts. Now you draw those districts practically, but you end up trying to make sure that various interest groups...are represented. In many other countries, you have a political party, and if they get... "x" percent of the vote, they get "x" percent of the delegates. And that's not a concept which is a part of the government of this country; but that was more the concept that the group of us felt was more appropriate.

DSG: Like Britain, or Israel.

ORR: Yeah. Trying to sell that concept on our campus, given the fact that there were always numerous forces who...preferred we not have any power at all--some within the administration, but really it was more students and other people who felt like they wanted the power...: the Texas Union.... And the thing was, there's no power to be had; it's like grasping for air, I mean, it's just not there. The influence that I had, and the things that I could do were directly related to how willing the administration was to hear the ideas that I had, or that people that I could pull together had, and whether those ideas sold or not. They had to sell on their merit, not because we had any power. At that time, Dr. [Harry] Ransom was the Chancellor, and even though Dr. [Norman] Hackerman was the President, we met with Ransom quite a bit. He was quite receptive; he took our ideas. We knew that ultimately those decisions had to be made by first the administration, and then by the regents. But the meetings of the cabinet of students, which he had, which was drawn from various interest groups...

DSG: Rather than from the student government.

ORR: Right. Student government was a part of it. That, I thought, was where we did our most productive work; and that's where the most ideas that assisted the University in its primary goals came from. There was a certain tension there, between the office of the chancellor, which at that time was located in the Tower, and the office of the president. Ransom was responsible for the entire system, and Hackerman was responsible for this campus. We didn't have much contact with



Hackerman, which I think was unfortunate; at that point, the main administrative person we had contact with was Dr. Ransom. And there were different people on the Board of Regents who were receptive to our ideas, and they wanted to visit with us about our thoughts; not, again, because they had any obligation, but because they felt like that was a worthwhile way to help administer the campus. There were two or three really good Board members; there haven't been that many good ones appointed since.

We had a good relationship with a number of members of the regents.

DSG: I'll come back to that in just a second.... I wanted to ask you about the role of parties--the Rep Party was still around, and there was an article in the Texan that talked about other parties that would rise up as anti-this or anti-that, and then as soon as they got their people elected, or tried, they would did out. Was that pretty much the role of parties--just as an election process?

ORR: Yes.

DSG: Was there any kind of active party rivalry in the Assembly?

ORR: No; not really.... I never considered it; I was a member of the Rep Party, and probably one of the very few candidates of the Rep Party ever elected president of the student body, because the Representative Party at that period of time notoriously could not elect--they could elect other officers--but not the student body president.

DSG: They didn't have the machinery, or what?

ORR: No; it was viewed as a fraternity-sorority group, and whenever you got up to things that students took halfway seriously, they just didn't like the rich kids.

DSG: But at one time, the Greek "clique" was very powerful, because they had the organized machinery, and there wasn't really any organized opposition from the independents. Were the independents better organized?

ORR: Well, you had Maurice Olian, who was elected--Greek, but he wasn't Rep Party.... Lowell Lebermann was Rep Party.... You had, I guess, Julius Glickman, who was independent, and had nothing to do with the Rep Party.... Then Greg Lipscomb, who kind of came up Rep Party, and was fraternity, but never really was part of the Rep Party. Then myself; Clif Drummond was not a member of a fraternity--he may have been formally, but he was not active... Then Lloyd Doggett; I don't know what party Lloyd ran with.... But the Rep Party held a reputation of not being able to elect student body presidents. I never did consider the parties all that important; I mean, they were something that you had to work with....

DSG: You were still being funded on a cut from the blanket tax at

the time. Was the total amount that student government received sufficient?

ORR: Oh, yeah.

DSG: You didn't ever find yourself pinched for funds?

ORR: I don't really recall that it was a big problem. The kinds of things that I wanted to do didn't take money; they took time and getting good people involved and sitting down with the right people and developing a rapport, so we could talk about things the University ought to be doing, and offering direction; things like that.

I know that there were certain people on the regents that felt like if you could cut off their money, you could stop student government. But student government didn't have nearly the problem with the regents that the Daily Texan did. In fact, the most important thing that I accomplished during my administration, that very few people know about, was keeping the regents from...

DSG: ...censoring the Texan.

ORR: Censoring the Texan. And that was done all behind the scenes; it was done quietly in negotiations with the regents. And they eventually got around to doing it, but they didn't during that administration.

DSG: How would you evaluate the motivations of the people who participated in the student government process?

ORR: Oh, there were all different kinds of motivations, just like there are different motivations of people who participate in any kind of government activity. There were certain people who were highly motivated by their concern about the direction of the University; there were others who were motivated by just their personal ambitions. There's always got to be a certain amount of personal ambition to put up with all that stuff.

DSG: The reason I asked was because, before a Board of Regents committee on Academic and Development Affairs, John Silber said, "What we have here is charade government, where people are running through the motions of politicians." And Gerhard Fonken said, "Student government is the toy of amateur politicians." They were both really slamming it.

ORR: Silber and I didn't disagree that much. I had, as good as anybody can ever have a relationship with Silber, a good relationship with him. To make it a little, mini-government was just unrealistic, because you didn't have the power. You can't have a government if you don't have police power--if you don't have the power to enforce your rules. And we didn't have that power; we weren't ever going to get it.

DSG: You're probably one of the few presidents who's ever realized that, at least during his term.

ORR: It was a charade, and that's what caused people to lack respect for it.

DSG: Was that also the reason that voter turnout was so low? Turnout really plummeted, compared to a couple years before; you had 13% in your fall election, and something like 20% in your spring election--considerably lower than the previous years; it was a new low.

ORR: I don't even remember who ran against Clif [in the spring election]...

DSG: Was there any kind of student disenchantment with the government at that time, or was that still in the future?

ORR: Election turnouts for any election really don't bother me that much. If people don't want to go vote, well, that's OK. Not only do you have the right to vote, you have the right not to vote; if they weren't willing to take the time to learn a little bit about it.... I mean, I like people to vote; just like in any election, politicians say, "We want high turnout." But really, what we say is "We want people to have an interest--read about the candidates, study them, at least listen to them on one occasion. That's what's important; and then go vote." But to have some dummy go down to the polls and punch certain holes for certain candidates that he doesn't know, or because he likes that name--that doesn't serve any function.

DSG: Good point. You were talking about your relationship with Dr. Ransom at the time, and you told me before we were on tape that you sat in on every regents' meeting?

ORR: Yes. Not the executive sessions, but for public meetings, I was invited; I was always well-treated.... Frank Erwin was just really becoming a power on the Board at that time. I was never terribly close to Erwin, but I didn't have a bad relationship with him. I worked with Mrs. J. Lee Johnson, who was appointed out of Ft. Worth, and Rabbi Levi Olan, who was out of Dallas; and all the members, including Erwin, were always willing to sit down and listen. You have to kind of use your human relations there; I mean, you can't jump up every time they say something that you don't agree with and yell and scream. You've got to pick your times. You don't have any legal power; your power is in your ability to persuade.

DSG: Your administration came at a time slightly more than a year after the Berkeley revolt, and a lot of campus uprising was starting to spread across the country. How do you think the regents and the administration were reacting to that, as far as how they related to the student government?

ORR: I got the impression that they felt it was important to keep communications between various elements on the campus, not just student government.... Those members of the administration, and those

members of the regents who were comfortable, or secure, in their positions, were always receptive. There were certain members of the administration, a little bit lower down, that always felt threatened and were not as receptive.... There was a lot of tumult on the campus having to do with the Viet Nam War, but the real confrontation was nothing like--I went to Columbia Law School when they shut it down--it was nothing like that.

DSG: In '68?

ORR: Yeah.

DSG: What was the story behind that?

ORR: The administration just did some stupid things; played right into the hands of these few radical elements. That campus is not synonymous to this one; it's colder, not as personal. They just had the attitude that they didn't care what any of the students thought; when I was here, the attitude was, "OK, we care what you think, and we'll listen to you. We may not do what you want; but you come in and make your presentation, and we'll give it a lot of consideration."

DSG: So it was more of an open forum.

ORR: I felt it was. I felt that the principal people in the administration and at the regents were. I may not have known the whole story, but....

DSG: There was one point where the regents--this was in July--in a closed executive session added two faculty members to the Union Board, changing from a student majority to a non-student majority. What was the reasoning behind that, and what was the student reaction?

ORR: Well, of course, I was on the Union Board.... The Union people always felt like they ought to run the Union, and student government ought to stay out of their business; it appeared they didn't want our help. I think it was probably unnecessary. I never did understand why there was any upset with the Union Board; the Union had been run pretty responsibly.

DSG: Do you think it was a try to take some power out of the hands of students, in one of the places where they had power?

ORR: Of course, it's power doing things that don't matter. I mean, I don't want to belittle them, but running dances and the bowling alley--those are good things, and I'm for them; but that's not the essentials of what you go to a University for. I thought it was a tempest in a teapot, to a large degree.

DSG: What about your relationship with the faculty and staff? You seemed to put a pretty heavy emphasis as president on providing or instituting good communications with the faculty and staff: the As-

sembly passed a bill at one point, forming a Faculty-Student Conference Committee to promote formal communication with the Faculty Council.

ORR: We never were able to sell to the faculty members the concept of "Look, what we ought to be doing is talking, and working together." You know, Silber's point was always, "You're transients. You don't really know the problems here." He wanted the power in the faculty; and of course, when he went elsewhere and got into the administration, he wanted the power in the administration; so, to a certain extent, Silber wanted the power wherever Silber was going to be. But nevertheless, his points about student government, many of them I agreed with; but I would have liked us to develop a more formal dialog between the representative student body and the representative faculty body.

DSG: So it really didn't work out too well.

ORR: Well, it was a start; but it was never really carried forward. There were certain professors who went out of their way to try, and many of them were fairly influential on campus. But nothing ever really formal; and that was really one of the problems: they didn't view the Student Assembly as being representative of the interest groups on the campus, but rather representative of politicians--not unlike, to a certain extent, how some people view the Legislature.... I wish that could have developed more; I think that would have been the way to go.

DSG: OK...the blanket tax was voluntary, at the time you were president.

ORR: Yes, it was.

DSG: What degree of power did you have in allocating the blanket tax? Was it pretty much what you said, went; or was it subject to review or frequent change by the administration?

ORR: Oh, subject to review.... I don't remember us having any major fights over it; maybe we did, but they just weren't important to me at the time.

DSG: Did you get the feeling that the Association was in control?

ORR: Yes. I mean, there's no question where the legal power resided. Again, we tried to do what we could by being persuasive; but I never did think that was that important a thing.

DSG: You didn't think it was important to the power of the Association, or anything?

ORR: No. Well, it was important to power, if you look at it as power; but I never thought that the Association had power--wouldn't ever have power, can never have power.... The taxpayers of the State of Texas pay for that university; they and the members of the Legislature aren't

about to turn it over to a bunch of students--that ain't going to happen.... I mean, I went to Chile, and it happened down there, and it was a mess....

Power was something that I thought was illusory. It's an illusion that people attach to it [student government]....

DSG: What was the campus environment like, politically and issue-wise, during your term?

ORR: Well, integration was still an issue. We worked hard for the integration of off-campus facilities. This was before the Civil Rights Act of the mid-'60s. I know I spent a lot of time talking to operators of dormitories off-campus, trying to get them to open their facilities; trying to integrate the businesses around the campus; and a lot of that was done in just private conversations--we had no power; we were just trying to persuade....

We had not integrated athletics...

DSG: Were you working on trying to get them to integrate athletics?

ORR: We, at that point, had some discussions with the Athletic Council, but it was not seriously considered that we were working on it. We spent a lot of time on that, which I thought was very worthwhile, because I think we did make some progress, and it was done in a--at that period of time--relatively peaceful manner.... It was certainly handled as well or better as those kinds of issues were handled at Columbia when I was there....

DSG: What was the campus atmosphere like here? I'm curious; the theme of the Challenge Colloquium that year was "Campus in Ferment"...and it looks like your term seems to, correct me if I'm wrong, mark the beginning of the real unrest on campus.

ORR: It was the last peaceful year. We had the integration demonstration, we had a few Viet Nam War demonstrations; but there was not a large upheaval. This was and remains a bit more conservative student body than some around the country, and it was not the tumultuous times that later did follow. The atmosphere--people were really starting to get concerned about Viet Nam, because it was beginning to get out of hand, and there was a lot of serious thought.... The atmosphere was, by and large, OK. Later on, it got a lot tougher.

DSG: Was there concern over such things as students' personal liberties and the doctrine of in loco parentis, and so forth?

ORR: In loco parentis was very big, and this was about the time it was dying.... That was a big thing of Greg Lipscomb's; he was president before I was.... It started to die, really of its own weight; the administration said, "Look, we can't do this."

DSG: On administrative initiative, or on student initiative?

ORR: Well, it was kind of a combination; but it wouldn't have happened if the administration hadn't decided it didn't have time to watch these people's personal lives.

DSG: Was there a lot of student vocal opposition to in loco parentis?

ORR: Oh, yeah; there was a lot of discussion and a lot of concern about it, and it was always a topic at various meetings and things of that sort. It was about that time that, for various reasons, it all kind of started to fall apart.... We spent a lot of time talking to them about how they should structure that new dormitory [Jester Center], and coed dorms, and activities in dorms, and interdisciplinary courses: educational ideas like that. They may not excite many people, but they're important.

DSG: Let's turn to the area of student participation in policymaking, because this seems to be something that really begins during your term. You proposed at one regents' meeting in March, late in your term, that students be allowed to sit on faculty committees--have a vote on certain committees and have non-voting seats on others. The editor wrote in the Texan in February that there was "a trend towards seriousness in student government," that people were being serious in trying to get a role in governance...and that "if students cannot a significant voice within the University, they will attempt to influence it from the outside by such methods as demonstration and unionization."

ORR: Which would never have worked in this state.

DSG: How effective were you, in getting that student input?

ORR: The voting part was never as important to me as it might have appeared; I'll say that; because some students thought that was so critical. You were never going to have a majority vote. That was symbolic, to have a vote. It was important to me that there be joint opportunities for students and faculty and administration to sit down and talk about things, and that that dialog go on; whether or not there was a formal voting apparatus for students was important to some students, and important enough that it was included. It was never that important to me; the important thing was to get them in there, and let them bring their perspective, because I found on numerous occasions that when students would bring their perspective, carefully, logically, and reasonably thought out, and whenever faculty or administration was willing to listen to them, they could say things that the faculty and the administration would say, "Hey, yeah, that's something we need to consider."

DSG: So your viewpoint was considered.

ORR: Yes. I think we were considered, at certain levels. Again, some did, and some didn't.

DSG: Did it take the form more of "students want this; we demand this,"

or was it more "here's something we think you ought to think about"? On many other campuses, it was the former.

ORR: No; my approach was always a much lower key. Maybe mine would have been more effective if there had been some outside activity raising hell, so the administration would have looked at me as an alternative that could have been acceptable. But it's not my style to go barging in and demanding things. On occasions, when I felt on one or two issues extremely strong, I would try to get ideas in that made sense, and try to set up an apparatus whereby there was an on-going dialog between the various elements on the campus...since we would never be allowed to be in a position where we would have actual power. Now, they might have given us some votes--kind of throw you a bone--but sometimes that backfires on you, because all of a sudden, you're in a minority, and the other fellows feel like....

.....

I felt like the faculty should have had a bit more input in the administration...but there were some faculty members who handled it very well. But the power will always lie with the administration, because they are ultimately controlled by the regents, who are appointed by the governor, and approved by the Senate, and that's where the political power in the state lays, and that's where the purse-strings lay. And to try to go somewhere counter to that would have taken a massive uprising in this country and in this state that, in my judgement, is not going to happen--and shouldn't happen.

DSG: But you felt that, within the limitations you were operating in, you were reasonably effective?

ORR: Yes; I think we were. I don't think that many students understood it or realized it or appreciated it; I think there were certain key students that did, and certain key people in the administration that did, and I felt like I was doing what was right, and I felt like I was going about it in a way that was most successful. That satisfied me, and Drummond shared many of my ideas. But you've got the problem that it always turns over every year, so there's not a long enough period of time to really get a philosophy going and established. You really don't even have it at the state government level; even a four-year-term governor is hard. But I thought that within the limits in which we had to work.... Before the end of my administration, I started getting kind of fed-up, and sort of frustrated and almost "it's not worth fighting it," particularly because the adversaries were not at that time within the administration; they were not really on the regents, although there may have been one or two. But there were certainly enough people on the Board who were willing to listen and wanted to listen, and invited me to state my view. But it came from other elements on campus that at some times I thought saw, all of a sudden, "Hey, he's being heard, and we're not"--petty jealousies. If those people had just come in together, I was certainly willing to let them share their ideas and speak their peace.

DSG: So they didn't really see it as their official "voice" to the



administration.

ORR: That was a problem; that's why we wanted to restructure it: so that the various interest groups around campus--well, you're always going to have over 50% that don't care--but you need to have a good, hard core of representatives from the interest groups who feel like this is a mechanism in which they can be heard. Their voice, although it won't be any louder than anybody else's, will be heard.

.....  
Our goal was to try to get all of the interest groups involved, within limits. You know, I've often thought back and thought that maybe just wasn't realistic.

DSG: Did the administration and the Board of Regents and so on see the Association as the official "voice" of the student body, representing the voice of the student body?

ORR: I think certain people in the administration were realistic, and said that there will never be...[a single voice that represents everyone on campus].... By a few members of the administration, and a few members of the regents, it was always the favorite whipping boy; anytime something was going against them and they wanted to turn it around, they'd say, "Well, the Students' Association doesn't represent anybody--you have low turnouts." Heck, the turnout in our election was as high as a lot of these elections that are held out around the country for other things. That was a false issue;...I think those that acted in good faith said, "OK, we're willing to listen to these people." And it wasn't just me; it was others who would try to get involved.

DSG: Better to hear some voice than none at all?

ORR: Yes; right. "These are rational people; they represent rational ideas from the student community, regardless of how they happen to get there; and their opinions ought to be heard, as long as they recognize that they do not make the ultimate decision."

DSG: What about the Students' Association's role in off-campus affairs? This kind of started a couple of years before your term, this business of "questioning the student's role" in off-campus affairs.... What kind of activities did the Students' Association get involved in, off-campus?

ORR: There was a group, that was a minority, that felt like we should be doing things like that. Probably the Viet Nam War brought that up more strongly. Generally, while I was there, that was resisted, and was not done. The Daily Texan, of course, always did. On the city and state levels: city, not at all; state, yes--I came down and testified against tuition increases and that kind of junk that you're kind of obligated to do.

.....  
The only level of government that I felt we had more to do with was the Legislature. And the biggest problem Frank Erwin always had

was the Daily Texan, because it was distributed at the Capitol during the Legislature, free of charge. We thought it was a very practical thing; the Legislature does not always act in a rational manner, particularly when they're under pressure.... And all of a sudden, some really asinine things would be said to the Daily Texan, and there it shows up down at the Legislature; and Erwin was the main lobbyist down there, trying to get things for the University. He really didn't care what the Texan said. He wanted to get them off-campus, number one, and he was tired of having to defend them as the official voice of the University of Texas student body. Off-campus, they could say what they wanted to say, and not go down to the Legislature and say that they were representative of the student opinion on the campus--because the Daily Texan rarely was; it was an opinion....

DSG: Did students feel, or yourself feel, that the primary role of the Association was on campus, or was it proper for it to be off-campus?

ORR: No; it was on campus. Our main purpose was to assist the University in achieving the goals for which the University was established. And that is the primary role of that student organization.

DSG: Did the students have any kind of sense of being self-governed; of belonging to "their" Students' Association?

ORR: No; some did, but it was a pretty small minority, because there were other interest groups that they felt more closely aligned to: co-ops, fraternities, dormitories, other social organizations; and those were the kinds of interest groups that we hoped to begin to restructure around. They felt closer to those, because they had a more day-to-day contact with them, kind of like neighborhood associations. And I don't think that on a campus that size you could ever have a student senate or whatever it is...we're up to 48,000 or so, and you're never going to get them all in; that's just an impossible task....

.....  
DSG: Were the students pretty much supportive of the Association? Did they tend to attack it when things went wrong--what was the general feeling toward it?

ORR: Well, there's always a lot of apathy. But there wasn't a lot of attacks; I never got very many irate letters, although I got a few. A lot of the things I was working on and doing were not high-profile things; I tried to let people know about them, but talking about having two or three people sit down with a committee of faculty members or administrators and talking about interdisciplinary programs, or how we're going to structure the new dorm, things like that, are not the kinds of things that excited students. You know, people would say, "That's fine, go ahead and do that," but they didn't get excited on it.

DSG: It was less controversial?

ORR: It just wasn't controversial.

DSG: What would you consider to be the outstanding accomplishment of the Orr Administration--what lasting mark did you leave?

ORR: We were able to persuade the administration and the regents to not, at that time, censor the Daily Texan, in a quiet, professional discussion way.... That did not hold up over the years, but we were able to stop it then. That got very little publicity.

DSG: No censorship at all?

ORR: They always made it clear that there was a boundary over which we stepped--but our agreement was that there were important things that could be said that needed to be said, without going out of our way to make the administration unhappy.... At that time, the president of the Students' Association was also president of TSP; that was probably what I considered my most important function.... I felt like our being able to keep the Daily Texan as a quality paper, as far as student papers go, and to keep things relatively peaceful, plus the influence that we had in the continuation of off-campus matters for our Black students, were just terribly important. That was something that was going to come; if anybody had had any insight at the time, they would have realized it was going to come; but it was very controversial, and probably not supported by a majority of the students.

.....  
It's still a problem--of how you integrate minority students into the entire activity. I'm sure that the minority students still feel segregated at the University of Texas. That, I thought we made progress on; it was a positive thing. There were some dorms that did integrate, did drop their restrictions; and that made a lot of publicity.

DSG: Let me ask you to look ahead at the prospects for our now not-so-new Students' Association: do you think that a Students' Association is a feasible activity on a campus with a population approaching 50,000 people?

ORR: Sure. Of course. As long as they don't fall into the trap of thinking that they're a government--they are NOT a government. They do not have the essential powers that a government has that permits it to govern; they will not have them...

DSG: Police power and the power to tax?

ORR: Right. The police power; the power to force people to do what you want them to do, or put them in jail if they don't, and all that kind of stuff--you're never going to have that. As long as you realize that your goal is to try to get as many of the diverse elements on campus--and it's clearly difficult on a campus this size--to get representatives of those people in contact with willing people in the administration who want to see the University developed and continue to advance, and want to put in their time, and listen to ideas. The

members of the Legislature, and members of the faculty, certainly--of all the groups, the members of the faculty are in the best position to give you good guidance for how to run a university--but the members of the Legislature, they play a role in it, and cannot be ignored.... The students...can bring to bear some approaches, and some ideas and thoughts, that ought to be considered. The job of student government is to get those ideas put together, and channelled to where they'll do the most good.

DSG: As I mentioned earlier, tonight we're swearing in our new president. If he were to come sit down with you today, as I am, and say, "John, I'm trying to do a really good job here; my predecessor didn't really have much time to really get things off the ground--it's my chance. What suggestions would you give me to help me make it succeed," what would you say?

ORR: Go find the good people in the University, wherever they are; find the people in the student body; seek them out, by going to their meetings and talking and learning and finding people who could say, "OK, these are people you can rely on; these are people who have good ideas; these are people who are willing to work within the system"--and I always worked within the system--some people don't; I did--"their egos aren't so giant that they have to hog the stage to themselves," that's a real problem; and find those people, and get through some formal, if you can get it, or informal, if you can't, conversations, dialoging with the faculty and the administration. If you've got a good dog in the administration, I would think that you could probably do that. Now, I don't know the administration out there that well, and I don't know the regents out there that well, but I would think that you could do that.

The one area that we just didn't pursue, but I think that given longer, it can be done, was getting a dialog with the faculty, where the faculty didn't view us as a threat.

That's where his energies should be spent. But doing that kind of thing takes time, lots of time; and it takes more than one administration. And that's what's so hard about it. But I think it's worth the effort; it's certainly worth a hell of a lot more than some of the other junk that you're asked to do, which is just people acting like they're, I don't know, getting ready to run for governor. I never had any aspirations to do that, but most people in student government do.

## JOE KRIER

February 18, 1983

*Joe Krier was president of the Students' Association 1969-70, probably the most violent, tumultuous school year in the history of the University of Texas at Austin campus. He helped guide the student government and the student body as a whole through the riot in the Texas Union Chuck Wagon, the Waller Creek protests against construction of Bellmont Hall, and the march of over 20,000 students to the Capitol in protest of the May Kent State killings; through all the unrest, not one life was lost.*

*I traveled to San Antonio in February to meet Joe, now an attorney with Groce, Locke, and Heddon, and we spent nearly three fascinating hours together in his office as he explained to me the new and unusual challenges that both he and the Students' Association were faced with during his term.*

DSG: I wanted to ask you about the structure of the Association during your term, and one of the things I was curious about was the House of Delegates.... What was the function of the House of Delegates, and why was it created in the first place?

KRIER: Gosh, I'm not going to be able to be a great deal of help on that...

DSG: How long had it been around?

KRIER: A couple of years; maybe not even that long. The reason is that my vice-president, Ernie Haywood, was the administrative officer and chairman of the House of Delegates. I was the chairman of the Student Assembly, and each of us had our hands full with those respective groups. My recollection is that the idea behind the House of Delegates was to create an organization which would be organizationally based in its membership, i.e., dormitories and various other groups could have a delegate to the House of Delegates, and therefore, hopefully, it would be able to get a more immediate sounding of opinion from a pretty significant cross-section of the campus than the Student Assembly would, inasmuch as those people were elected by much larger constituencies which did not meet at regular times--if you were an assemblyman from the College of Arts & Sciences, well, I mean, my God, there was no convocation of the College, so whatever you did to find out what was on everybody's mind was on your own, whereas, in the House of Delegates, the delegate from Roberts Hall dormitory or Orange Jackets could always go back to that group and say, "hey, we're going to vote on X, Y, or Z, what do you want me to do?" And as a result of that, my recollection is that the House tended to spend a lot of its time taking stands on various issues confronting the campus, and that the Assembly, being smaller, was not excluded from doing that, indeed, did do that, but tended to be more involved in the kind of day-to-day specific policy-making, the designation of students to sit on various policy-making boards and commissions throughout the campus, things of that nature.

DSG: What was the legislative interaction between the two, as far as bills, etc.--did they have to pass both houses? Or were they pretty much separate bodies?

KRIER: My recollection is that some did and some didn't. I think we had a real peculiar mix....

DSG: What about your committee system--how did you organize that?

KRIER: OK...unless I say otherwise, I'm talking about the Student Assembly, because the House really was something that was just way on over there. I want to say that the committee structure of the Student Assembly was generally appointed by the president of the student body, although some committees, as I recall, were elected from the Student Assembly itself. I don't remember the titles of these things, but I'm sure they fell into logical categories--Housing, for example..., Student Activities..., State Affairs...I know we had a committee that dealt with the Legislature when it was in session, and in fact, the Students' Association had a designated liaison to kind of work in a committee to deal with the Legislature, Travel Committee, that dealt at that time...with student charters and trips and all that sort of stuff--some of those things, student government would actually sponsor. None others really leap to mind.

DSG: Did you make any changes that you recall of any substance in the governing structure, constitution or otherwise?

KRIER: During the '69-'70 period, no. What we inherited was essentially what we kept. There were so many other things going on that year that the structure of the government was kind of an aside. ...My guess is that my election saw probably the peak in terms of student numbers participating in student elections. Unless I'm mistaken, somewhere between 8 and 10,000 people voted in my election for student body president, in which there were like eight candidates and there was a run-off.

DSG: There were about 10,000 the next spring, which was the Jeff Jones election...

KRIER: That's true. After that, I suspect, it starts to fall off pretty dramatically.

I think now, it's down to a level where it makes the process all but meaningless.

DSG: How would you evaluate the degree of student participation in the government? We were talking about voter turnout, which would be mostly the people who weren't directly involved--what about the people who were working directly with it? What were their motivations, what were they trying to get out of it? Were they in it to...

KRIER: Play politics versus help the campus?

DSG: Yes--pad their resumes, personal prestige....

KRIER: The same reasons that I see people are active in politics today; which is exactly what we've been touching on. Some were there because they really enjoyed trying to make things better, and felt that the challenge was worth it; there were people there who viewed it as practice for politics in later life; there were people there who did it just because they enjoyed manipulating the process and the people and what have you; there were people there who did it just because of the ego strokes they got out of it. But I'd say overall, if I look back at the caliber of the people on my Student Assembly and the people I saw running for office during that time period, serving on committees--that was still a period of great commitment during your college years to making the world a better place. All of us really believed that if we worked hard enough at it, we could make the world a better place than it was before we came there; and there was just a large number of people who felt that it was your duty to do that: that you were not in the University just to have a good time and get a degree so you could get a good job. This job pressure was almost nonexistent....

DSG: When do you think that feeling of trying to make the world a better place began?

KRIER: Oh, I think it began, definitely, during the Kennedy years; that would be my guess, because I got out of high school in '64, which was a couple of years after President Kennedy was assassinated, and I remember that whole...push from Kennedy's election in '60 that went through all that period of the '60s--you know, this belief that people made a difference, individuals made a difference, and the hope of the country was in the youth of the country, and the colleges and the universities were the cream of the youth of the country, so they had a duty. My guess is...that it really started to pick up steam in the civil rights movements of the '50s.

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DSG: All right...let me ask you a little bit about your relationship with the various power bodies on campus: first of all, the Association's relationship with the Board of Regents.

KRIER: Well, of course, this is the peak of the Erwin years. Interestingly enough, in my judgement, we did pretty well during the Erwin years in some ways. I would think that my philosophy, and Lloyd Doggett's, was that you have to recognize that in the end, student government always exists at the sufferance of the Board of Regents. As a practical matter, everything on campus exists at the sufferance of the Board of Regents, and trying to ignore that reality has caused some of the problems that have occurred since the '70s.

I think our relationship with the Board of Regents, by and large, was pretty good. We got some things that we felt were significant; we didn't get some things that we would have liked; but in terms of communication--you know, I'm one of Frank Erwin's great admirers; we spent

half our time screaming at each other, and half our time drinking whiskey together. I could call Frank Erwin up at 2 o'clock in the morning and say, "I need to see you about something," and he'd say, "Fine; come on over." Now that's something you can't say, I suspect, about a lot of chairmen of Boards of Regents in this state, this country, and in the University of Texas history.

DSG: Or presidents of the student body.

KRIER: True....

DSG: Were the students aware of that relationship?

KRIER: Yeah....

DSG: How did they feel about it?

KRIER [laughing]: Mixed. It's a real bridging period, you know; I went to Erwin's later on--I don't think that was the year I was president; it was later when Erwin was stepping down as chairman of the Board--and I went to the black-tie dinner that they had for him. I'll remember it for the rest of my life: I was just booed horribly as I went into...Palmer Auditorium.

DSG: You were booed, or he was booed?

KRIER: I was booed. I mean, everybody that went in was booed, but I was recognized. Erwin was enormously controversial, and a substantial number of the student body thought he was just the slimiest thing that ever walked the face of the earth.

But I think that Frank Erwin was probably one of the greatest men who ever served as chairman of the Board of Regents, and probably did more for the University of Texas at Austin than any other person in this century. And I'm not sure that's stating it strongly enough. He really does not get as much credit [as he deserves]; when you die, people forget very quickly.

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DSG: What impact did Erwin have on the student body?

KRIER: Well, enormously controversial. The Waller Creek thing happened early on; that's an area where I disagreed with him violently, and I thought the University's handling of that--number one, what they were doing, and number two, how they did it--were wrong. And the problem that Frank Erwin and the University has always had is being willing to say "That was a horrible mistake; let's get out of this." The tendency of the institution has always been, once a mistake has been made, to just go ahead and carry it out, and damn the consequences. Waller Creek was an example of that: taking the decision as it was, it did not have to be put into effect with the kind of brute force that was utilized, which gave the University a black eye all over the state; my God, we got national publicity out of it. So to that extent, I think he was viewed by the student body as being very powerful, very abrasive, and insensi-



tive to students, generally.

DSG: Did it tend to tie the student body together, or make it more divisive?

KRIER: Well, I certainly think it gave everybody a convenient target to attack. He was the focal point for all the things people didn't like about the University, whether it was the way we handled tenure, whether it was the way we handled freedom of speech on campus, whether it was the way we handled landscaping, which is essentially what Waller Creek was about, whether it was how we handled commitment for construction of new buildings, demonstrations against or for the war--he reveled in being in the middle of those controversies; loved it. And Erwin realized that there was a real political value to him in having the students, particularly the far left political wing of the students, be violently opposed to him, because he had no political constituency he had to worry about, and it allowed him to go to the Legislature and always say, "You don't need to worry about ME; I've got all of these people against me. I'm with you guys!" It was a convenient and very helpful, constructive device for him. He knew exactly what he was doing at all times; Frank Erwin never unknowingly stumbled into those sorts of controversies.

DSG: Did you still have the Student-Regent Liaison Committee in effect when you were president?

KRIER: No. I attended all regents' meetings, wherever they were.

DSG: Were you allowed to speak?

KRIER: Anytime I wanted to; in other words, anytime I wanted to be on the agenda concerning an item, I could be on it. I mean, obviously, I was not allowed in the executive sessions, unless I was invited, which I was from time to time. But yeah, anytime...that was one of the understandings that Erwin and I always had, that if there was anything that I was concerned about and wanted the students' voice heard on, whether it was critical of him or not, we got up there and got to speak. And there were times when I arranged for some people to get up to speak who said some very nasty things about him, and that was fine with him. Erwin was one of those people who felt that part of the process of meaningful government--not just student government, but government in general--was that you could disagree publicly, but get along privately. If you let the bitterness of your public disagreements go all the way down to the core of your personal relationships, that government could not function; what would happen eventually is that no one would be speaking to anybody, either publicly or privately, and the whole system would grind to a halt. Other people disagree with that. You know, Frank Erwin and Babe Schwartz, for example, were big, violent political enemies from time to time, in terms of Schwartz getting up and saying things about Erwin, and ranting and raving; but you could find them drinking whiskey together at regular intervals, because they both understood that what they were doing during the

daytime was representing the views of their constituency and their people and doing what they had to do, and when they were off duty, they didn't have to carry all of that down.

DSG: What about your relationship with the UT Austin administration, President Hackerman and so forth?

KRIER: Well, we went through Hackerman, Bryce Jordan, and my recollection is that Steve Spurr wound up succeeding the Jordan interim presidency. Is that correct? Hackerman left to go be president at Rice; he was fired-slash-resigned....

DSG: As I recall, Bryce Jordan was still ad interim president at the end of the school year.

KRIER: Oh; yes, that's right. I sat on the search committee which selected Spurr after I finished being president of the student body, and that's why this all kind of flows together.... That's why it was such a fascinating time to be there; the whole Hackerman/Silber/Erwin thing went on shortly before and during the time I was there.

To answer your initial question, I think [the relationship was] generally good. I think Norm Hackerman, in retrospect, is viewed as one of the most effective presidents the University has had: tough, fair, totally principled. Hackerman always said, "I don't need this job, and if the time comes when I've got to do some things in order to hold onto it that I don't want to do, I'll go," and he did.

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He was very tough; could be ruthlessly mean; he's a chemist, the classic science type--very analytical, not warm, not real social, folksy, or anything like that; he does have a good sense of humor. But in any event, he was very responsive to student government, but one of these people that viewed it...as kind of something you just had to put up with. He put up with it as much as he could, but he wasn't going to take any guff from anybody.... If you had a good proposal, and it sounded interesting, he'd be receptive; if it was either poorly prepared, or if it was something he just fundamentally disagreed with, he'd just say, "Look, I'm not going to buy that, and I don't want to waste my time talking about it, and here's why: A, B, C; good-bye."

DSG: Was it mostly your communication with him, or did he have an advisory council composed of students from the Association and other places?

KRIER: No; at that point the college councils were just beginning to be noticed...

DSG: Because President Wilson had an advisory-type council....

KRIER: Really? Hackerman did not. My dealings were immediate and direct with him. God, when we had the great riot in the Chuck Wagon, all of our dealings were direct. But he, like Erwin, was always some-

one you felt like you could call, right now, and say "Listen, it's really important." And it damn well BETTER be real important with Hackerman. You know, you could just go right on over to see him, whether it was 7:00 at night or 9:00 in the morning; as long as it was not 4:00 in the afternoon, when he played squash, it was O.K. He walked out of regents' meetings at 4:00; I mean, he played squash every day at four, and there was NOTHING that was going to stop him. He'd walk out of Faculty Council meetings; just say, "Gentlemen, it's four o'clock, and I have my squash game; I'll entertain a motion to adjourn," and that was the end of it! Great guy.

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DSG: What about your relationship with the faculty and staff, on the University committees and the protest movements?

KRIER: Well, some good, some bad. We had developed in the years before '69...alliances with certain segments of the faculty. Jim Roach, who was in Government; Irwin Spear.... We had faculty members on the Union Board the year before who allowed us to take effective student control of the Union Board for the first time in eons. The way we did it, and I think it was Lloyd [Doggett]'s idea, was that we had the board as a whole, say with 11 members, and six are non-students and five are students; we had two or three faculty members who voted with us to create an executive committee of the Union Board which was peopled by all the student members plus one of the faculty members, and that the decisions of the executive committee could only be overridden by a three-fourths vote of the Board as a whole. They voted that through [laughing], and the effect of it was that you had a student majority on the Union Board. It was really a neat trick.

So there were a number of people on the faculty who were very pro the students being more independent and having more control over their own affairs. I'd say the staff, with the exception of the Student Union staff, was not receptive. Power flowed from the President; they weren't terribly interested in anything other than staying out of trouble with students on a day-to-day basis, and there was not a commitment to helping student government along. Student government was something that could only cause them problems, not help.

DSG: What about those faculty members that you served with on the Faculty-Student Senate and those type committees--the committee to select the president, and so on?

KRIER: Mostly, that worked pretty well, yes. Which is not to say that a significant portion of the faculty leadership didn't basically adopt the viewpoint that the only reason students were at the University was to provide a vehicle by which professors could have a paid occupation--that students were there to be taught as the faculty felt they ought to be taught, and that was pretty much the role that students ought to play; and I mean a number of leadership faculty on these committees took that posture. What you found on a regular basis was that the faculty were interested in allying themselves with the students when they needed support on fights over tenure, or issues affecting the faculty--smaller class size, things of that nature; but

when it came time to get big chunks of the faculty to stand behind the students on whether or not the students ought to control the student activity fees, or whether or not there ought to be more student governance of housing policy or dormitory rules and regulations--any of those sorts of immediate...[issues]--that was something where everyone just kind of took one step backward. That's overstating it; it's not that they were running away from being of help on that issue; it's just that they didn't care. So it was always, yeah, we're glad to have you students help on those things that are important to us, but there was a much smaller number that were willing to be of help when it was the flip side of that coin.

DSG: Let me ask you a related question: we were talking before about the committee to select the president; and you also succeeded, I believe, during the year in getting three students appointed to the building committee. Were the students fairly powerful in these committees? You were probably a minority in each case.

KRIER: Always. It depended on the nature of the students. I think that's true on everything; if we had good students on those committees and they really wanted to play roles, the Texan was always willing to see that it got the kind of coverage it needed, and they could be effective. A lot of them weren't effective because they were outclassed mentally, or because they weren't interested in being there other than for the honor. You always have that problem--you try to get the best people that you can, but you deal from the pool of those who express an interest most of the time, and sometimes it turns out their interest isn't as deep as you thought it was.

DSG: The Students' Association still had some control of the blanket tax; to what degree? Weren't there some changes made by the administration and the Board of Regents on how the students could control that?

KRIER: My recollection is that, up through my year, at least, that the Student Assembly voted on how...that money would be spent; and although it was subject, as everything is today, to regental approval, the history was that that was not tampered with. And it was not. The only area in which there was always ongoing sensitivity was the amount that Al Lundstedt and the folks over in the Athletics Department were going to get. I really think that there was an unspoken understanding that as long as the Assembly awarded what the Athletic Council felt it needed to run the athletics operation, that in return for that the remainder of the blanket tax would be left untouched.

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That understanding was pretty much lived by by everyone. My recollection is that when Jeff [Jones] came in, the whole house of cards started falling apart.

DSG: Did the regents, do you think, make a conscious attempt--probably after your administration--to sabotage the student government, or to weaken it by removing control of the student services fee?

KRIER: It was made easier; in other words, the second I think the administration came to the conclusion that the leadership of student government was not threatening to them--well, I don't know; I don't want to use the word "threatening"--let's say, came to the conclusion that, number one, the leadership of student government would not be able to reach out beyond the University community, beyond the student community--and with Jeff, you had kind of a sundering of an ability to do that; he automatically, obviously did not have the support of whatever percentage of the student body voted for his opponent, but it was more so than it had been in other elections; I mean, in mine or anyone else's, the guy who came in second place, his pitch philosophically was not that much different from mine; a question of direction rather than a gigantic splitting of the ways--it's easy for the administration and the regents to start reducing student government's power, influence, whatever you want to call it, when it can't build up any resistance to that within the faculty, within the student body as a whole, within the larger political community, and the state as a whole. To the extent that you've got students going home to their families and saying "Good God, we've got a bunch of crazies down there running student government," well, then you get this ever-increasing ripple effect.

So in answer to your question, sure. When the administration and the regents reached the conclusion that the radical student population, which it was self-styled as, had taken over student government, they felt number one that it was in their own best interest to start taking some of that stuff away, and number two, they didn't have a lot to fear politically from doing it. They sure weren't going to get any criticism from the Legislature--not the kind of criticism that they run the risk of always incurring when they take on the Daily Texan, where the Daily Texan is being even remotely responsible, because then you get a lot of people at the Legislature and the press around the state saying, "Wait a minute--this is freedom of the press!" And I think that as long as you had a student government that was perceived as being generally representative of the student body as a whole, they anticipated getting the same reaction when that sort of thing happened. And the other thing I think you can't underscore enough, David, is the--and this is how it kind of starts affecting student government, even though I think the quality of the leadership was not bad [later on]--when the regents start looking at a student government, say in mine where you've got a very significant percentage voting in the election, and five years later, it's a third or less than that, you know, what do they care what student government thinks? I wouldn't, and neither would anyone else. It doesn't speak for anybody, which is the fundamental problem with the collapse in voter turnout.

Long answer.

DSG: How important do you think it is for the Association to have control of the student services fee/blanket tax? How important was that to your administration?

KRIER: Well, of course, it's one of those traditions you inherit, so you want to preserve it. I mean, subjectively, it was important because

it had been that way and needed to continue to be that way. Objectively, it has always seemed to me that if there is one area that students ought to be in charge of, it's the management of the funds which they tax themselves in order to spend on activities which primarily they participate in. So I think it's extremely important, and that students ought to be responsible for those funds today as long as the mechanism that's doing that can show that it speaks for all the students, or can at least make that claim.

DSG: OK. What sorts of campus-related issues did the Association concern itself with? Of course, there was a LOT going on on campus in '69-'70, but...

KRIER: Oh, God, yeah. I think...the two most significant things that happened that year, if you exclude the fact that we were caught up in the heat of the Viet Nam War, and therefore were impacted by things that were impacting the whole country, in essentially the same way; but some of the things that were important to us I think were unique to us. For example, we hired the first students' attorney the year I was president of the student body; that was a fight that had gone on at great length under Rostam Kavoussi, who preceded me.... A number of us met with Erwin after I was elected, and the basic question was whether or not he was going to veto...the students' attorney deal or not, and we told him we did not want him to do that; and then set up a search committee, and found Jim Boyle. Who that first person was was, in my judgment, an absolutely critical decision; if it turned out to be some incompetent or someone who was not vocal--a really good politician and also a good lawyer--there wouldn't be a students' attorney today. And that's probably done more good for more students in the intervening 14 years than anything that happened in that decade--certainly as much as anything that decade; I don't want to step on anybody else's parade. The other thing was...the Student Housing Commission, which was a very active group that...dealt with...just an enormous number of complaints about student housing, people's problems with contracts, discrimination both racial and otherwise; it did just a tremendous job at a time when the statutory framework was not nearly as supportive of consumers and tenants as it is today. Those were two things that were going on on a day-to-day basis in kind of a quiet, not in front of the newspapers way. Notwithstanding that, it had an enormous impact.

But, in terms of other things, you had the Waller Creek great uproar; you had the great Texas Union upheaval...

DSG: What was your role in that?

KRIER: Oh, gosh....

DSG: You're talking about the Chuck Wagon disturbance?

KRIER: Yeah. It's amazing what a vast difference 14 years makes. The Chuck Wagon had really become a focal point for just the vast...number of kind of runaway "street people," was the only term that you can use; runaway kids, anything from below college to way beyond college, who

went from place to place, I suppose as hoboes did during the Depression.

DSG: Now, they call them "Dragworms."

KRIER: "Dragworms," O.K. Well, they all LIVED in the Chuck Wagon. We had a lot of dope dealing going on there; ...what it effectively had done was it had driven students out from using it, except for very few--it had become so totally unpleasant. The Union Board voted as a policy matter, and all the students on the Board supported it, that we would limit the use of the Chuck Wagon to students and faculty--members of the University community.... When it came time to enforce that, everybody kind of knew ahead of time that the street community was not going to voluntarily leave, and ultimately it took bringing in police force to get them out. Like a lot of things at that time, police tend to take matters into their own hands, which they did; and the next thing you knew, you had a major riot on your hands. And I and the members of the Union Board were involved from the very beginning to the very end of that thing in doing what we could, initially, to persuade everybody to leave voluntarily and to warn them that the police were coming in, and then once the police came in, trying to get as many people out as we could before they started making arrests; once the tear gas started slinging, well, we all beat a hasty retreat to a more breatheable area. It was an incredible experience.

DSG: What about in the aftermath?

KRIER: Well, there was a grand jury investigation.... I don't remember what happened as a result...

DSG: There was something about the Assembly requesting charges be dropped against those individuals not charged with direct violence. It created a legal defense fund to aid those charged otherwise; the D.A. later dropped charges against several students, but it doesn't say whether that was because of the Students' Association or not.

KRIER: I don't remember. I'm sure, though, that that had some effect; student voting, also, was picking up about that time, and there was increasing responsiveness to students from the elected community in Austin. But it seemed like we just went from crisis to crisis; you didn't get one out of the way--it just flowed into the next big one. My last day as president of the student body was the day of the great Kent State march. I always kid everybody that 25,000 students turned out on my last day in office to thank me for the wonderful job I'd done; I served my last day in office as a parade marshall, with eighteen jillion other people, to attempt to make sure that that was a peaceful parade. And it was.

That was something that was very explosive, that Kent State could happen; we had a big fight on campus about whether flags were going to be flown at half mast or not. It's almost difficult to grasp how desperately emotionally, and how life-and-death, everybody viewed those issues: it really seemed like the world as we knew it was just collapsing.

DSG: We were talking a minute ago about your relationship with the administration. On administrative policy decisions that were student-related, how much input did the Students' Association have--on changing regulations, this kind of thing? Were you ever able to initiate any kind of action like that with the administration? Or was it pretty much more of a reactive type [of input]?

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Were your opinions taken seriously?

KRIER: Oh, yeah; I never felt that they weren't.

DSG: Did they carry a fair amount of weight?

KRIER: I don't want to overstate.... I hope you don't find on all of our past student body presidents the tendency to draw this picture of this magnificent entity that was just brimming with power and influence that kind of sailed through the seas of state. You know, the thing is, and I see this now after having gotten out of the University, that you don't get much done in a year anywhere, no matter where you are or what you are doing. A year is a very short time, particularly when a year is only nine months, as it is in a university community. You're elected president of the student body in the spring, you barely get cranking when it's time for summer vacation, and everything just comes to a grinding halt--the students are gone, and the faculty, staff, and administration are off schedule so that you can never get two people together for anything. You come back in September; you get a pretty good lick until final exams time comes; then spring break comes--you get maybe a month in January and February, and then it's times for elections again! You know, boom! it's over with. So for me to tell you that there was just a whole lot being done would be ludicrous. The other thing is that the University bureaucracy then, as I'm sure it is today, is almost like the Chinese Mandarin Empire bureaucracy in a lot of ways: things move exceedingly slow; there's a tendency to study things to death. At every step along the way, everybody had every input in the world; everybody is respectfully listened to and seriously paid attention to--the problem is that that process takes FOREVER. And then it bounces its way up to the next level, and the next level, and it gets whittled at little here and whittled a little there, and by the time it comes out at the end, nobody recognizes what started in at the bottommost level.

So a great deal of student participation was ultimately meaningless. That wasn't because it was student participation; it was because that was the nature of the way I think the University functioned, and still does probably: an enormous amount of inertia which discouraged significant, major changes. And the only way you got major changes, ala the students' attorney...if you went through the normal process and had that work its way all the way up to the Board of Regents, you know, you'd be two or three student body presidents later before you got to that point, at which point whoever was student body president would say, "Well, hell, I don't know what that is; I couldn't care less." So the only way you really got something was at this level, you bounced up to



the Frank Erwin level and said "Hey, this is real important to us, and we really do want this." And the next day, Erwin would make a phone call to the administration, and that very day I'd get a call from the President's office saying "We'd really like to see this legislation ASAP," and it'd just go zip! right on through. But you could only cash in a very limited number of those chips in one nine-month period, because you only had so many you were going to get with him, and you didn't want to waste them. And, too, there was so little time in which to confront it: student body presidents serve the shortest term of any elected official that I know of.

DSG: How was the Association involved in off-campus affairs--city, state, national, politics or otherwise community involvement?

KRIER: To a relatively limited extent. We dealt with the Legislature very seriously, and with the governor's office very seriously, always with regard to legislation trying to get students on the Board of Regents, trying to get governors to appoint either students or sympathetic individuals when those appointments came up; and there were always ongoing committees to deal with the Legislature. Federal government was less issue-oriented than it was...getting programs where students could intern in Washington offices, that sort of thing.... Very little Students' Association interaction with Austin civic activities--United Fund or any of that sort of stuff.

DSG: Jump back to on-campus for a moment. Shuttle buses: I know the service started during your year; had that been passed by the Assembly your year, or was that the year before.

KRIER: I suspect that had been perhaps several years before. That project, I know, was one of the few that was worked on for years before it was finally made to function. I wouldn't be surprised if that goes back to Lloyd's, or even earlier, because I remember committees working on that shuttle bus problem, how to finance it, where it would go, and all that sort of thing; it was one of the best thought-out processes of anything that we've done. It was something that, if you want to point to something that really was the result of a lot of student pushing and initiative, that's it. It also resulted because the University recognized that it had a gigantic parking problem on its hands, and either the University was going to have to spend an enormous amount of money acquiring land and building parking lots, with no end in sight, ever, or, as it turned out, they could get students to fight for a shuttle bus system which, obviously, made a whole lot more sense.

DSG: Let's turn now to the efficacy of the Students' Association. We've already talked about the weight that the students' opinion carried with the administration and off-campus. How about from the point of view of the average student--the relatively uninvolved student? Did he see the Association as his official "voice" on and off campus?

KRIER: A lot of students didn't. If you go back, you'll find that Mickey Mouse was a candidate regularly; some entity named Amy the Wonder Dog was a candidate; I mean, there have been fictitious candidates, I

suspect, for as long as there's been a student government.... The point, though, was that until after '71-'72 or so, fictitious candidates didn't win elections. A significant number of students did regard student government as their spokesman on campus affairs; a significant number never did--never has, never will. And there's an interim number in between that sort of regards it as their spokesman probably on issues they like, and not as their spokesman on issues they don't, depending on how they feel on any given day. In terms of '69-70, and I'll say this even through Jeff's election--I think the student body made a horrible mistake, but in a democracy you're entitled to do that--from an efficacy sense, as long as you have that many people participating, then I think the system is working and has the support of those served by it. Now, I subscribe to the old Chinese view, that the mandate of Heaven is withdrawn from governments: when students decided to withdraw the mandate, they did so in the only way they knew how, and that was to quit voting.

DSG: Why do you think Jeff Jones was elected?

KRIER: Well, there's one theory--I say there's one theory; I certainly hope it's not widespread--that it was a referendum on my performance in office. My own feeling is, it was one of those things that was going to happen sooner or later, because of the trend of national events. You were seeing radicals being elected at campuses all over the country. Jeff Jones was the first serious, intelligent, incisive, provocative radical who had run for the presidency of the student body at the University of Texas--I say he was the first; there had been others, but the time was right. You had a year in which the administration and regents consistently overreacted to student disturbances; you had a year in which all of the bad aspects of Frank Erwin's personality in terms of dealing with students were highlighted; and of course, at the end of that year, you had Kent State--that was right after the election--but you had all this unrest and unhappiness going on across the country; President Nixon's administration was in power at that time, which was seen negatively by student bodies everywhere, and ours was no exception. And so all those things came together, and students decided they wanted a radical president; they were going to give that a try and see whether or not that would produce some radical changes. It did not. And when it did not, that's when I think they concluded that they would withdraw their mandate--and gradually did.

DSG: Did the students seem to perceive that they were self-governed? Did they have a sense of "belonging" to "their" Students' Association? Of course, they were all members, but to what degree would you say it was a cohesive organization?

KRIER: No; I doubt that if you took a poll, that there was that kind of specific consciousness, although going into '69, I think a significant number of students thought that their student government did have a voice and a major impact over significant aspects of their lives. Coming out of 1969 and going into 1970, because of the things that were happening with the Viet Nam War and the University's response to

student reaction to that, I think there was a growing feeling that they were mistaken--that student government was not perceived as being able to control those areas that they felt most affected them. The problem is, I think there was a shift in perception over what people felt most affected them.... Before you sailed into the Viet Nam War period, you had a lot of concern with civil rights; you had a lot of concern with dealing with landlords on housing; with representation on committees affecting academic standards and policies in governance. Well, all of the sudden, those things became very inconsequential. The question was whether or not you were going to serve in a world which you didn't particularly agree in and in which it did not appear that your government was accurately representing the wishes of the populace. And so student government was able to deal with the first set of matters I dealt with pretty well: student government led the way on civil rights; student government led the way on students' attorneys, on involvement in the academic governing process--all of that came from student government. But it was not able to deal with the war. I don't think it could, frankly; obviously, nobody else could--it almost brought the country to a standstill. Lyndon Johnson lost the Presidency over the war. But, you know, if the constituents decide that something's important, and that you're supposed to do something about it, well, if you don't, that's the way the cookie crumbles.

DSG: Would you say, then, that during your term, the students' attitude towards the student government shifted more toward condemnation, especially when there was a crisis in progress; or were they mostly still supportive even though they didn't see it as representing their views? At some point in history, you have people saying, "Student government is ineffective, it's not good, let's get rid of it."

KRIER: I don't know...

DSG: I mean, did you ever hear thoughts to the effect of "Maybe we shouldn't have a student government"?

KRIER: Oh, yeah; you heard those thoughts all the time, from 1964 when I came there as a freshman until 1971 when I left law school--there were always people saying it ought to be abolished. We were always scared to death that there was going to be a referendum on whether or not to abolish it. In retrospect, if there was, I don't think it would have passed. After this Chuck Wagon uproar, we had a student referendum; the Union Board requested that the students place on the ballot a referendum on whether or not the use of the Chuck Wagon should be limited to students, and it passed, by a very healthy margin. So, to the extent that that's a signal, we had the support of the student body on where we were going and what we were doing. But you're right; at some point that was lost.

.....

If there had been no Viet Nam War, we would look back on that year and say, "My God, we got a students' attorney hired, that's tremendous..."

DSG: And instead, we look back and say, "That was the year of the

Waller Creek incident..."

KRIER: "...and the Chuck Wagon riot, and the 20,000-some-odd march after Kent State." All of those three essentially arose out of the same unrest that was sweeping over the University community.

DSG: What would you consider to be the most outstanding accomplishment of the Krier Administration? What lasting mark was left?

KRIER: Well, let me say this. Number one, there is nothing that I would personally lay credit to. I can't think of a single thing that happened that year that, but for the help of a number of other people, it would not have happened.

If you want to say what is the most significant thing that students brought about in 1969-70--number one, there was no loss of life on our campus, in one of the most tumultuous periods of time in American history.

DSG: Because of efforts of the student government?

KRIER: Because of efforts by the people in student government; I've got to give student government some credit for that, because a whole lot of those other parade marshalls were Student Assemblymen, and a whole lot of those people who tried to keep the Chuck Wagon uproar from winding up with people being killed--which it well could have, and the Waller Creek incident from winding up with people being killed, which it well could have--and I don't mean by people being shot, although in some instances that was the case, but by their being trampled to death or crushed by bulldozers, or from riots breaking out during the Kent State march. That was not the case on other campuses across the country.

Frankly, until you sat down here today, I really hadn't thought about it that way. I've normally always said it was the students' attorney. But I mean, we came through that year intact. That's an accomplishment of some magnitude that I played a small part in, and perhaps a small leadership part in; but I'm relieved of that more than anything else. It would have been very easy to look back and say, "My God, that was the year that ten students were killed at the University of Texas...."

The other thing, though, is that we did go ahead and get the regents to approve the students' attorney, and chose, through a student selection committee, an individual who made that office be effective and labored for it to become a permanent institution on campus.

.....

DSG: Let me ask you now to look ahead.... What do you see ahead for our new Students' Association? Is it even a workable kind of thing to do on a campus of almost 50,000 people?

KRIER: Well, it certainly ought to be; I mean, there's no reason why you can't have effective student government--no inherent, internal reason.... The ingredients are there. But the only way that student government can ever be effective is if it has a mandate, a commitment

from enough students so that it is perceived as having a meaningful voice with the administration and regents. "Enough students" is not 90%, it's not 60%, and I suspect it's not necessarily even 50%; but I can tell you that it's NOT 10%....

I would not want to be president of the student body today. If I was a student today, and was driven toward making a contribution, I suspect I'd be inclined to go elsewhere. It's got to be extremely difficult--and I've seen this guy [Paul Begala] who got elected president of the student body; I was there for the opening of the Centennial, and he was introduced on the stage and got a pretty good round of applause; I was surprised, because the turnout was so low, and he lost to Amy the Wonder Dog, or whoever it was...

DSG: Hank the Hallucination...

KRIER [laughing]: OK, Hank the Hallucination....

DSG: Actually, it was one of the highest turnouts we'd had in several years for an election....

KRIER: But the guy got a pretty good round of applause, and looked, to the extent one can make a judgement on appearances, like a pretty good guy. But I wouldn't want to be in his shoes, and go to the president of the University, to Pete Flawn, who strikes me as the most receptive president to students that we've had in many, many years, and say, "President Flawn, I believe the students want so-and-so." Flawn doesn't have to say, "Look, buster, you and 2,228 students may want so-and-so, but The Students don't want anything of the kind." Pete Flawn has probably met, personally, with more students than voted for this guy; if I know Pete Flawn, he has. And so what you get is a vicious reverse circle: because you don't have a lot of constituents behind you, you don't have a lot of influence; and because you don't have much influence, you don't get much done; and because you don't get much done, all the people that don't vote in the first place say, "See? You can't do anything; I'm not going to vote the second time either." It's just awful. I'd run for editor of the Daily Texan if I were there now; it strikes me that that's the only remaining major position of being able to have an impact...on student life and getting the administration to do things. That's where I'd want to go.

DSG: If you had to sit down with Paul Begala, our new president, today, and he were to...say, "Mr. Krier, I'm trying to get this thing off the ground, and I'm trying to do a good job as president. From your experience, what suggestion would you give me to help me succeed," what would you tell him?

KRIER: Well, the first thing I'd say is please call me Joe; I hate to be called Mr. Krier!

I'd say, I don't know, because you've got so little time. The only thing that you can really do is to see if you can change the world for the guy that comes after you.

DSG: Say he's re-elected.

KRIER: Then what? He's got another nine months? You know [laughing], that's less than a pregnancy....

DSG: Well, that's a novel way of looking at it....

KRIER: Yeah; it takes longer to make a baby than it does to be president of the student body of the University of Texas.

What he's got to do is to figure out a way to measure student support. And I don't know how you do that. The only way you could begin to do it is to literally go out and build a grass-roots student government, the same way you build a grass-roots political organization, and that is in a pyramid fashion, step by step; you get ten and you ask those ten to get ten more each, etc., etc., etc. You go out and lay the framework for an organization that has support and commitment, as far out as you can make it go. Now, what vehicle you use to do that, I don't know; but it seems to me to be what he has to do. The only alternative to that is to get some kind of reliable polling mechanism that would literally let him determine student attitudes on a given issue at a given time and which would have enough credibility with the administration.... The problem is that it took several years for student support to be withdrawn; it will probably take several years for it to be recreated; and no single leader is there for more than one year at a time. So unless you view yourself as a part of a process and are willing to sacrifice yourself for that long-term goal, then you can't contribute toward it.

DSG: Knowing what you do about the student opinion, as far as "the jury's still out on student government," do you think we have that much time?

KRIER: I don't know. The odds are against it, because the attention span is short. You're not going to get any support from the administration and the regents; the last thing in the world they're interested in is a really strong, lobbying, active student government. Any university president, Pete Flawn included, and any Board of Regents worth its salt, ours included, wants to minimize the number of problem areas it has to deal with; and an effective, strong, well-representative student government that's got students standing behind it is a BIG problem area. So you're not going to get any help from them; and you lack the continuity to create that sort of thing on your own. So I'm not optimistic.

My God, what a negative note to end on.

## BOB BINDER

March 1, 1983

*President of the Students' Association (or as he later renamed it, Student Government) during 1971-72, Bob Binder succeeded the radical administration of Jeff Jones, inheriting a set of administrative, legislative, and regental attitudes toward student government that were completely different from those that had prevailed two or three years earlier. These new attitudes played probably the leading role in shaping the events, actions, and policies of the Binder government; another factor not to be overlooked was the continuing late-'60s style unrest on campus that included protests of the increasingly unpopular Viet Nam War. It was without doubt a year that played a major formative role for student government at Texas.*

*Bob Binder served in the Army from 1967 to 1969 as a lieutenant in the military police in Viet Nam. In 1969, he returned to the University of Texas, where he had received his undergraduate degree many years earlier, and entered the school of law. After his graduation and admittance to the Bar, he served on the Austin City Council (1973-75), and in 1981 made an unsuccessful bid to unseat then Mayor Carole McClellan. Today, licensed to practice law in Texas and California, Binder is a successful personal injury attorney in Austin. We met, late one afternoon, in his downtown office.*

DSG: Let's start out with the organization of the governing structure. Now, the House of Delegates had been either self-abolished or abolished by the students, I'm not sure which...

BINDER: It was abolished while I was there. There was a Senate and a House, and the House was appointed, and the Senate was elected on a relatively proportional basis; and it was thought that the House, well, it was a matter of anybody could just go form a club and then appoint somebody. So all the fraternities appointed somebody, all the clubs appointed somebody, and it tended to be fairly unrepresentative because this wasn't the source of funding, it wasn't the source of students, it wasn't the source of anything. It seemed like a rather arbitrary way to have a body called a House of Delegates; it wasn't really representative of anything except clubs. A lot of students objected. You know, let's say you've got a club of 100; you can get ten times as many representatives by splitting into ten different groups. And in fact, the [Young] Socialists [Alliance] did that: they were fairly persistent on campus...and split themselves into four different groups so they'd get four different representatives. This sort of game-playing rated poorly, and so it was abolished in favor of the town-meeting concept, which nobody really thought would succeed.

DSG: In between there, you had the Student Representative Council.... It was composed of one representative who was elected for every 300 students in each academic department. You had a total of 140 people in the Council, and it had the power to approve Senate-generated amendments to the constitution and the bylaws, and to approve certain

nominations; otherwise, its only power was to "meet and talk." That was abolished by constitutional amendment in a campus election October 27 of your term, and replaced by the Student Government Council, which was that "town-meeting" concept.

BINDER: I think we referred to it as the Student Council, and it was by school. If I'm envisioning it correctly, it's my recollection that they were not elected, but appointed from the schools by the deans. The problem we had with them was--well, you've got to understand the times. The student body president immediately prior to me, Jeff Jones, ran as an avowed radical. He very much enjoyed the attention that he got, and there's nothing wrong with that...but he presented an image that the regents just couldn't stand. And I mean, not just disagreeing with him: they despised Jeff Jones as a student body president. So the Student Representative Council, which we referred to as the Student Council, was really an attempt to change the power structure. They wanted to take away the power of the student government, and shift it over to some "safe" students who were appointed by the deans. The deans wouldn't dare appoint somebody that would antagonize the administration, at least not somebody like a Jeff Jones; and they were going to gradually transfer the funding to the SRC, again taking the funds away from student government until student government became a shell and the money...was with a bunch of "safe" students. This same attempt was made on the Daily Texan during that time, for the same reason--they couldn't control the editor, and as the late Frank Erwin very famously said, "We don't fund anything we don't control." So that was the plan, and it was quite obvious that that's what was going on. Tom Rioux was the president of the Student Council at the time, and he was also a student senator; he was part and parcel of the plan to destroy the Student Senate and the student body presidency and replace it with the Student Council, because he saw himself that the quicker he could do it, the quicker he'd gain power.... Fortunately, we thwarted it.

DSG: Was this a plan on the part of the regents, the administration, or what?

BINDER: I never knew where they came from; I just assumed everything came from Frank Erwin. There was turmoil during that time. I'll give you an example of how much things had degenerated, and why it was absolutely pointless to try to deal with the administration at that time. Bryce Jordan was the acting University President when I became student body president. They were going to un-fund entirely the student body presidency...and the entire range of things we controlled and the things we allocated.

DSG: You mean take away your power to allocate the funds, or take away the money that funded you?

BINDER: Both. This was going to be the recommendation of Bryce Jordan to the regents, and they were going to act on it. This was before open meetings laws, and regents, to the extent that they even published agendas, which they didn't really do, they would say things like "Student



Matters," you know, whatever that means. And one of the secretaries over in the President's office...called me two days before the regents' meeting to tell me that under the category of "Student Matters" was the proposal by Bryce Jordan to completely un-fund us. See, I didn't customarily go to the regents' meetings unless there was something on there, and it was implied to me that they would let me know if there was something that was of concern to me...

DSG: They didn't mind having you in there to speak, though.

BINDER: They didn't mind my being there; I still had to ask permission to speak. I didn't really have the right to speak, but any regent could let me speak, and Joe Kilgore or Lady Bird Johnson would almost always let me speak if I asked to speak to an issue. Anyway, I found out two days before the meeting that they were going to un-fund student government completely; and there was such an uproar about it that they deleted the item.

This is the sort of thing that I was dealing with on a day-to-day basis--an attempt to destroy it; not to alter here, alter there; they wanted to destroy it. Now, they were a little bit happier with me, following Jeff Jones, because I didn't fit the radical image; but they still weren't happy because I led the demonstrations, and was against the war which to them was, I mean, the Lyndon Johnsons and Walt Rostows of the world were quite prominent in the forefront of promoting the war, ...and since I was real actively opposed to it, they opposed me, too. But in reality, they did not like student government the way it had evolved; they didn't like its independence; they didn't like the monster they'd created, was the way they saw it. And so, they were trying to suppress the Daily Texan by appointing the editor, and do away with student government by providing an alternate, the Student Council.

DSG: When I spoke with...Jenkins Garrett, I asked him about some of the funding changes for student government in the early '70s. Of course, it was taken away at the end of Sandy Kress' term, two years later. I said to him, "Was there any kind of an attempt, in the post-Jeff Jones time, to consciously or unconsciously reduce the power of the student government?" And he said, "No, none whatsoever. We felt like we were doing what the students wanted. We felt like a lot of students didn't like their money being spent on abortion and stuff like that."

BINDER: He is being other than candid with you; he's saying two different things--he's saying, "No, we didn't, but here's why we did--because the students didn't like it." And of course they did; it's simply not true to say that they didn't try to reduce the funding or the power of student government. And the abortion issue was a very salutary one, which proceeds to this day; but at that time, as you know, abortion was illegal, and the nearest place a person could get an abortion was in New Mexico; student government undertook to provide counseling for young women who had unwanted pregnancies. They [the regents] wanted to stick their heads in the sand; they wanted to pretend there wasn't a problem. But Dr. Paul Trickett, the head of the Health Center at the time, advised me that in the year immediately

preceding, there were 500 unwanted pregnancies diagnosed in the U.T. Health Center--not all of Austin--500 out of a coed population of 15,000. That's about 3% of all the women on campus with an unwanted pregnancy; that was the year before, and it had risen to 700 in the most recent figures, but they were still collating those. The year before, one out of every 30 coeds on campus had an unwanted pregnancy.... We didn't try to talk anybody into getting abortions; they didn't know where to go, and they were going in Austin to butchers; they were going to Mexico to butchers; and they were dying, and getting infected; they were going for back-alley abortions in Dallas and Houston. And all we wanted to do were three things: one was to provide booklets...which talked about the different kinds of birth control--how to do it; what a condom was; what a Pill was and how it worked; things like this--which we eventually put out with private money because we didn't want to have a furor. In fact, one of the local churches funded it; that's how controversial it was--it was an Episcopal or Lutheran church, I'm not sure which, but it was a mainline church, and they gave us money. We distributed 10,000 of those, within a week or so, I might add.

Second, we wanted to provide counseling as to where to go; and third, in worthy cases, provide loans...for those that needed to go out there, and allow them to pay us back. That was what the money was for, and we honestly put it in our appropriations and went to the regents with it; somehow, that was too much for them.

DSG: You asked for \$2.75 out of the blanket tax, and it was cut to \$1.65, which was your last year's allocation with no increase. That was at the June, 1971 meeting; and they specified that those funds would be used only for office expenses, the election commission, and the Students' Attorney's office, and that any other monies that you wanted to use, you had to raise yourself.

BINDER: And we did raise some; but raising money yourself is a full time project, and it's an unrealistic way to fund student government. No government, not any government anywhere, any time, any place, relies on voluntary contributions to sustain itself.... A student government cannot rely on voluntary contributions for fundraising; that is not the nature of it and never has been the nature of it, and the regents themselves do not rely on voluntary contributions to fund the University of Texas [laughing], so they're talking out of both sides of their mouth.

.....

The idea that the elected leaders spend on some popular things that some students don't like--well, goodness gracious, I'm not one bit fond of hardly anything that Ronald Reagan says; but I have to pay my taxes.... That's the nature of the beast, and for them to say, "Well, there were some students that didn't like what Bob Binder or Jeff Jones said..."--the solution in a democracy is to vote somebody else in, and all the students could vote. The fact that they chose not to vote means nothing...that's never been a deficiency in the State of Texas for anything; people have an absolute right to choose not to vote.

These are all nonsense arguments. What they're trying to say is, "We don't like what they're going to do, and therefore we're going to make it some other way." The power I had, what I did, was by just doing it. We stopped submitting things to the Board of Regents, I might add, for approval; we went for two or three years before they did anything about it. That's what I mean by just taking the power. It got to the point where they were trying to tell us what to do; trying to dictate the content of what I would say. They didn't like my discovering their little slush fund that they have from the campus vending machines. There's a little cozy relationship over there.... We tried and tried to get it [a cut from the fund]; we tried to get ANY accountability. But it was a cozy relationship where the Ex-Students' Association would handle concessions from the vending machines, and they could fund whatever they wanted. And they'd fund things that the University liked--they liked the rifle team, the cheerleaders (that's where the cheerleaders got their uniforms from), tennis clubs, the band when it needed a little extra money.... As I recall, it was between a hundred and two hundred thousand dollars that they had available for funding; far more than we had. It was discretionary with the president of the University, and it was not public knowledge. The only reason I got the list...student body presidents before me for years had tried to get hold of where the money goes--I happened to ask when the head honcho was out of town, and an assistant was in the office, and he didn't know any better, so he gave it to me.

DSG: This was the president's discretionary fund?

BINDER: Right; which came from the vending machines on campus--a very clear example of money that principally came from students, that students had no say over where it went. It was a profitable situation. It was my position then, and it is now, that it's essentially student money; they should either operate them on a break-even basis, because the Ex-Students' Association is a non-profit making entity, or give the students control of where the money goes. It should not be a U.T. president's slush fund...everybody knew that the president got to call the shots. It was an unaccountable fund, is what I'm saying; it doesn't mean they were putting it in their pockets, or they're stealing; it means they've got a fund that's unaccountable.

.....

So I listed [on the Texan editorial page] where the money went--"Where The Money Goes." And it wasn't that it went such a bad place; students could judge for themselves if that's where they wanted their money to go. You know, I don't object to rifle teams getting money; if they'd come to student government and asked for it, they probably would have gotten an allocation. That wasn't the point; the point was that...

DSG: ...it was easier to get it from the President.

BINDER: Yeah. This whole thing had been going on for years. James Colvin, Vice-President for Business Affairs, obviously knew where the money was going; he was out of town. I did not do this by design; I

just walked in one day and was going to ask him for it, and he wasn't there. So I asked his assistant, whose name does not escape me, but it's of no real relevance here; and he said "Sure, that's in this file right over here." And I said, "Could I have a copy?", and he said "Sure!", and he Xeroxed a copy and gave it to me. It took all of two or three minutes.... I got interesting comments from legislators, who had no idea that was being done, from students that were outraged, and so forth.

That money could have been dedicated to student government; we could have done away with the blanket tax, and just subsisted on that.

DSG: So it wasn't a case of not having enough money; it was a case of not wanting to fund the government.

BINDER: That was the problem.... We were unpopular, and they wanted... us to go away....

DSG: They gave also to the college councils \$0.25 out of the blanket tax appropriation, which they hadn't had before.

BINDER: That was the first step in shifting it.

DSG: Decentralizing the power?

BINDER: Well, twenty-five cents versus our \$1.65. The clear implication was, next year it would be \$0.50 for them and \$1.40 for us, then \$0.75 for them.... The regents had patience; people used to always tell me, "The thing you forget, Bob, is that you've got to do it in a year; they've got a lot longer to do what they've got to do."

Frank [Erwin] and I, for all our public animosity, privately would meet; we didn't have secret discussions, but of all the regents, he would meet with mw privately and tell me what was going on--what were his plans. It was always agreed...that we'd be off the record; that I couldn't quote something and use it against him, or the meetings would stop. But I could come and ask him, "Is this what you're trying to do?", and he'd tell me; he was his own "Deep Throat" more or less, you know; he'd tell me what was really happening. He was a drinker of legendary capacity--capacity to take it, if not capacity to keep from getting drunk. He got drunk just like every other person on the face of the Earth, and it was at those times that I, more often than not, found out many of the truths that were about to be done to me. That's why I can sit here--I'm not going to quote Frank Erwin; I'm going to honor his statements even in death--but I can tell you, without any fear whatever, that yes, it was their intent to un-fund us; yes, it was their intent to move it to a college council. And to say that the regents were not trying to decrease our control or un-fund us is not true.

DSG: He told you that?

BINDER: I'm not going to quote him.

DSG: Not quoting, but...

BINDER: I know that. That is not conjecture on my part.

DSG: How would you evaluate the degree of student participation in the government--specifically, those people who were elected or appointed to committees and so on? What was their motivation for serving? Were they really interested in helping the student government move along, or were they trying to pad their resumes, or what?

BINDER: It depends on what you're talking about--in the Student Senate, you had a different breed of cat than if you talk about the people on the various committees like the Union committee, the film committee, things like that. Let's take the committees first: I was very pleasantly surprised to find that most of the people that served on committees were doing so out of just a very, very genuine desire to serve. It wasn't necessarily resumes...with one exception, and that was the Young Socialists Alliance, and they got on every committee they could, to control. They were as much a problem from the left as Tom Rioux was from the right. The YSA did things to try to manipulate the system.... I was very proud of what I did with my administration, which was different from what Jeff Jones did: I appointed people to them that wanted on.... Rather than try to people them with my friends or somebody who would destroy them, which was sort of the Jeff Jones approach, I appointed the...people that were interested in them and would work.... I tried to do that throughout my appointments; I had about 111, roughly, appointments.... I think we did a good job of that. The YSA, however, tried to impose themselves on some things. A stunning example: everybody needed to raise money, and it became obvious that one of the best ways to raise money was to show films on campus. So all of the organizations started showing films, and very shortly overtaxed the...abilities of the campus hall auditoriums in which we could show films; it turned out there were only seven, which in the early part of my administration could handle everybody, but then they caught on that this was a good way to make money. So we formed a film committee which would allocate the [space].... The YSA, because they wanted to show a lot of films and raise money for their cause, tried to get people on that committee in sufficient numbers. It had traditionally been Film students.... The YSA wanted to do that, and with their four organizations in essence wanted four times the slots allocated to an organization by random selection. We had to contend with that, because it was a clear abuse of the purpose, and we did; we just didn't allow them on. We just appointed RTF majors, as I recall..

The Student Senate: the people who were in that, I think, had a legitimate desire to serve.... I hate to judge their motivation, because I had a very excellent working relationship with the Senate. I think that they were genuinely motivated by a desire to serve. I guess, moving on in politics as I have, it was really refreshing--the debates in the Student Senate were debates of principle; they were debates of what we ought to do. We talked about what the students wanted us to do, and we tried to reach a decision as best as we knew how that the stu-

dents wanted. And it was fairly insulting to me--I'd just gotten back from Viet Nam and I was in law school--the distaste hasn't gone from me to this day, and I don't think it will 'til the day I die--that the Board of Regents, every one of them, without exception, is a political animal. And I don't mean that good, bad, or indifferent; but they're the product of the political system that we've got. Every one of them is extraordinarily successful, or they wouldn't be where they are.... They had a state university, where the students were allowed to vote--a free and open democracy--and they set about to destroy that institution because it didn't do or say what they wanted it to...

DSG: They set about to destroy the University?

BINDER: No, the student government, because it was saying things that were unpopular, and they didn't pause to reflect for just one second that the students in that university were the product of their professors, which were hired by their administration; and we were far more accurately representing the students. And we set out to represent the students; not the government of the State of Texas, or the City of Austin, or the United States, but of the populace on campus. And if the students chose not to vote, that also is of their creation.... The bitterness remains to this day, that I had to spend half my time to keep student government and the Daily Texan from being destroyed by the regents, the people who ostensibly are training the leaders of tomorrow.

DSG: You've mentioned voter turnout a couple of times; I found the figures for your fall elections--you had about 4700 out of 37,000, roughly, who were enrolled; that puts it above 10%. In the spring elections, 84 people filed for 31 open positions; that's the highest I've seen from all the years I've researched back to 1932. What do those numbers say to you about the participation of the student body at large?

BINDER: Student government was popular. The regents will say that it was not popular among the students; I know Jenkins Garrett, and... I talked with him at the time. I also know that they were listening to two or three students, who would be sons of prominent friends of theirs who would come home and say, "Hey, Daddy, Bob Binder's not saying what I believe in," you know. Of course, I tried to track them down; I'd call them up when they'd do this sort of thing and ask them about that. But they'd just listen to one or two or three people.

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It was Frank Erwin that was behind all this; it wasn't Jenkins Garrett. Jenkins Garrett was also one of the more popular regents; I do not fault him. I don't fault Frank Erwin--well, I guess I do and I don't. I fault him for what he did. But he had gone through the political thicket for so much of his life, that winning was all there was. He was beyond the point of principle. And I don't mean to say that he was unprincipled; but he was beyond the point of principle, or right or wrong. If it disagreed with him, his job was to change it. He so often did that down at the Legislature...it had nothing to do with right, wrong, consensus, agreement, anything--it was winning.

And that, like I say, was so refreshing on the Student Senate. We tried and tried and tried when we had our debates to do things by consensus, and not...to do things that were repugnant to a minority of members.

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To answer your very, very earlier question about having 80-some-odd people sign up for the presidency and the Senate, I was very, very gratified at that. We were popular; I feel like the students perceived that the job I'd done was a good and effective one. During my tenure as student body president, and you can look before and after, there were demonstrations, but there wasn't a single violent demonstration where students clashed with the police. And I believe strongly in demonstrations, and I believe equally strongly against violence; I went to many a demonstration and stood up there and led them in their protest against the war or unfairness or whatever, and [then] led them not to commit violence when certain ones would say, "let's take over the building," or this or that; I was the first one to stand up there and say, "No, that's not what we're going to do; you're going to have to come over me to do that."

I did convert one riot situation into a very peaceable one--again, the regents were their own worst enemies: the gay students wanted to have a dance in the Student Union. The Union Board voted to allow them to do so; the student government allowed them to do so. All the regents had to do was say nothing, and if their constituency ever complained, they could just say, "Those crazy students; we just can't control 'em--you know how they are; when you were a kid, you swallowed goldfish." That's all they had to do, say "We can't control them." But no, they decided they were going to step in and try to control.... They were going to stop a gay rights dance, which, Jesus Christ, the students and the press were going to stay away in DROVES, until they drew all this attention to it, and then it became the thing to go do: everybody's got to go stand up for it, because it's a student rights thing. As a gay rights thing, they would have had 50 or 60 people; as a STUDENT rights thing, there were a couple of thousand people there, and they all got there early, got in the ballroom, and said "We're stayin'." So I went in there and persuaded everybody that didn't want to get arrested to leave, and those that wanted to get arrested to stay, was basically what it boiled down to. And it was not easy, because people weren't just sitting around waiting for Bob Binder to come give them the word of God, either! They were in there, you know, "Hell no, we ain't goin'!" They were yelling and everything else like that. But I finally got it down to five people that wanted to be arrested, and the rest didn't, so the police let them out. I worked very well with the police and the students on that day, and it worked fine; but if they'd listened to the Board of Regents and gone and busted heads--I was being told all the time, by my sources that "the administration and the regents are telling us not to let you go any further; we've got to bust it off," and I said, "Give me a few more minutes," because it took me an hour and a half to get the crowd down to five people. I didn't want violence; that's not what I wanted for my tenure.

I can give you a contrary example right after I was student body president, and gosh, it made me mad, just made me furious. Some students had occupied the Tower, and I asked the administration on the scene...

"Let me go in there before you go in and gas or anything and try to talk them into leaving." I was in the military police in the Army... and I was trained in riot control...I know about these things, and they're very ugly once they get out of hand.... So we set our watches, and I said, "Give me five minutes before you do any gas or move on the building or anything," and they said O.K. I didn't want to be trapped in there either--be gassed and get my head busted, get trampled, or whatever. So I went inside and started talking to people, and I hadn't been in there one minute, before they threw some gas! See, they were going to implicate me, even though I wasn't student body president anymore, and this is the sort of bad faith I was dealing with, with grown-up, responsible adults. Of course, I had to leave...and I think if I'd had the five minutes, I could have done it....

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DSG: How were things under Stephen Spurr? It seemed like he was genuinely interested in, not necessarily doing everything the students wanted, but at least listening and hearing all views.

BINDER: That's entirely correct. Stephen Spurr was brought in at a very hasty appointment, because I, among others, was getting momentum together for the appointment of Page Keeton, Carole Keeton McClellan's father, to be the president.... I liked Stephen Spurr; I had no problem working with him; he just wasn't strong enough to stand up to the Board of Regents of the University of Texas and be a president. I don't know if Flawn is or not....

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Steve Spurr...tended to...well, he was honest with me. I have no complaint with Stephen Spurr except I wish he'd taken our position. He never, at least to my knowledge, was deceitful, lied to me, or anything; and once again, I had a lot of private discussions with him.... He gave me a lot of insight into the real political dynamics of what was happening also, and a lot of the things he said and did were in the perspective that hey, he's brand new on this ship; he doesn't want to rock the boat yet.

DSG: What about your relationship with the faculty and staff?

BINDER: Excellent.

DSG: Mutual respect?

BINDER: Yeah; there was no problem even when we disagreed. We got along very, very well, whether it was in the Faculty Council, faculty committees.

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There wasn't a clash of liberals and conservatives; there were clashes on different views on things.

DSG: What about your relationship with the Daily Texan? After a Senate meeting, the senators "stormed" the TSP offices, demanding more coverage, and so forth; and the Texan came back and said, "Well, if student government wouldn't end their meetings so late and would



do something worth covering, we'd cover it!"

BINDER [laughing]: You've been very thorough. That's what I'm saying: If the regents would have just left us alone...we had enough problems on our own. They united student government like the students themselves never would have; if they'd left us alone.... You know, student government and the Daily Texan are traditional enemies; and that's the place of a newspaper in society. But the regents very ham-handedly tried to knock both of us to the ground, so we naturally became allies. That particular incident--I was chairman of the board of TSP, so I had absolutely split loyalties, not only in principle, but in fact: I was the head of both bodies, and one was marching on the other. I spent most of that evening convincing the student senators that this was a fight we couldn't win. It's their paper; they write it. We may or may not have some titular authority over it...but the fact is that they're going to write that newspaper, and they're going to have the last word. And I remember that lesson to this day: you cannot win fights with people who buy ink by the bucket, and that's true.... And then I spent the next hour and a half or so going around apologizing to all the miffed egos--we didn't mean to and never would intrude on your turf, and what you write is solely in your discretion; I'm so appreciative that you give me a column on the editorial page that I don't know what to do--and so on.... I learned early on...that my communication with my constituency was through the Daily Texan; I couldn't reach those 36,000 students standing on the Mall, I couldn't reach them through the radio or T.V.... My channel of communication was the Daily Texan, and if I'm fighting with the editor, I don't have it, or I'm going to get kicked around and we both have a draw. So what I did, early on, was aggressively cultivate a good relationship with the Daily Texan, and had one.

DSG: In December of '71, on recommendation of Chancellor LeMaistre, the regents reduced the power of student-faculty committees in non-student appointments...to an advisory capacity....

BINDER: Yes; there was a reduction in power, and there wasn't a damn thing we could do about that.

DSG: What was the impact of that?

BINDER: Was this after Spurr?

DSG: Yeah; it happened after Spurr was appointed, and Spurr's comment on it was, "Well, since I was the last president appointed under the old system, I had better not say anything."

BINDER: Yeah. It was because of Spurr, though. The presidential search committee had been appointed by Jeff Jones--the student members; I don't know where the faculty members came from, probably the Faculty Council--but the rule was then that they had to come up with five candidates, and from there on the process was restricted to those. If one of those wasn't selected to be the president, then it started all over

again.

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They changed it so they wouldn't be hemmed in by the recommendations, because they felt hemmed in, having to select Stephen Spurr. That was not who they would have wanted; that was well known by the folks that kept up with it, that Steve Spurr was not who they wanted to be president, but he was the best of the bunch to avoid Page Keeton. I objected to that; it cut down the student power; it did not affect me personally. I mean, I felt very strongly about it, but what I'm saying is, that wasn't directed at me; it was directed at Jeff Jones.

DSG: The Association still had the power to allocate the blanket tax, or student services fee, as it was later renamed. How important was that?

BINDER: Of great importance; it was of great importance, because we were not a debating society. Power does, to a large extent in our society, come from the allocation of dollars.... They wanted us to be a high school student council. You know, I had some sympathy when Art & Sausages had the slogan "Money Talks," because the regents got that crass and brass-knuckled about it. It got to the point that they weren't willing to share any power; and you know, I didn't want to see student government abolished, and I still think that was a mistake, but I certainly sympathized with the idea of doing that. It's cutting off your nose to spite your face; but on the other hand, I guess it's the reverse of what Jenkins Garrett said...they were saying, "We don't want any of your puppets and lackeys in here either, and we will destroy the government before we'll have a government that basically represents the administration and the deans." So that's essentially what they were saying, even though they put it in a very humorous vein. It was a great mistake, though, and the reason it was a great mistake was because what power the student government had, had been won by guts--just taking it, doing it, whatever; precedent. I refused throughout my term to submit a copy of the constitution to them [the regents] for ratification, because I didn't think they had any business, and I still don't, ratifying the student constitution. And they called me in about once a month...and I had weekly conversations with the administration...and practically weekly conversations with Frank Erwin. In the administration, sometimes it would be Vice-President [Ronald] Brown, sometimes the Dean of Students, sometimes Stephen Spurr, sometimes all three within a week; but at least one a week in off-the-record discussions, so we could just exchange views. That was Spurr's instigation, so that we didn't get cross-wise, and it was a good idea. I would practically get pleaded with to submit the constitution to the Board of Regents, because they were making requests for it all the time, and they were going to have to de-certify the student government and this, that, and the other thing if it weren't submitted.... The last one ratified by the regents had a House of [Delegates], and mine didn't have a House; mine were just being ratified by the Student Senate, and the new constitution said that was OK, but the old one didn't.

And so the regents said, "Look, give it to me and I'll GET it

ratified; but it's just got to go up there," and I said, "No, no"; it was just a matter of principle: this is not for them to say--this is our student government, and if they choose to de-certify me, we'll fight over it. You know, I'll go public, and they'll go public, and they may win; we'll go to the courts if we need to--we'll do whatever we need to do that's lawful.... And they never did a thing.

That's what I'm saying: if the student government will take the power and do it, they'll get a lot more than rolling over and saying, "We want it written down"; if we'd insisted on having it written down, we probably wouldn't have gotten it.... It's just a question of standing up to them. There's lawyers in this town who would just LOVE to represent the students against the Board of Regents.

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DSG: We've already talked about some of the campus-related issues that you addressed--the birth-control handbook, the gay-lib thing--what else did the Students' Association address itself to, campus-related?

BINDER: Well, the students' attorney was controversial. Ours was the first in the country, and they did not want to continue to fund it. That was one of the things we were able to continue funding out of the blanket tax, and that was a big concession.... The objection against the students' attorney, in all candor, was that he was representing students against landlords, and the landlords were friends of the regents, and they were complaining.

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Another thing student government did was the shuttle bus system. It was in existence before I was student body president, but it was on a trial basis. We set up the routes. I might add that Tom Rioux, my nemesis, that was his strong point, and I put him in charge of shuttle bus routes.... But we expanded that, and made us the shuttle bus committee, and so forth. We had an ombudsman, Hector DeLeon, who's running for city council; he was I think the second ombudsman. We expanded his power, and would back him up on things.... The Wage/Price thing was very interesting. I flew to Washington, and tricked my way into--the wage/price freeze said that everybody was going to freeze wages and prices where they are, including people that rent to other people. The regents went ahead and raised the rates in the dormitories, saying "That doesn't apply to us, because we're a government agency." I read the law; I was no brilliant lawyer by any stretch of the imagination, but it didn't say it didn't apply to governmental agencies. So I went to Washington, and couldn't get into the Wage/Price Administration, so I just said, "Would you call up to the head, and tell him that the President of the University of Texas is down here?"

DSG: You said the president of the UNIVERSITY?

BINDER: I just thought I'd bluff a little bit. I said the president; not the president of the student body, but the President of the University of Texas. And he said, "Go right on up"; I didn't give him my name; he just said, "It's the first door on the left," or whatever. And I got up there and, of all people, Mary Pearl Williams, who's now

a judge here, that's where she worked at the time. She said, "I was expecting Stephen Spurr!" [laughing], and I said, "Well, here I am," and she said, "Well, as long as you're here, let's talk." So I'd gotten in, which was the hardest thing to do, anyway. We talked for about a half hour, forty-five minutes--and she agreed. It got rolled back.

DSG: Now, you got the married student housing...

BINDER: Yeah, the married student housing rolled back; it did not roll back Jester, but that was the compromise. Again, that somewhat helped my popularity with the students, and student government was seen as effective, because we didn't just rant and rave; we did some pocketbook issues; saved some people some money; made the University of Texas live by the same laws that everybody else had to live with, and a few things like that. And you know, I look at what I did as just as fiscally responsible as any conservative would want.... They didn't like these things; the regents liked having it their own way.

Jeff Jones was singularly ineffective because he cursed at the darkness; I've always been very result-oriented. I wanted to try to do what would work, what would get us a good result; I didn't want to just sit back and yell "abortions ought to be legal"; I wanted to say, "OK, how are we going to help these women that need help--not talk anybody into having an abortion...."

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DSG: How about off-campus affairs? How were you involved in them?

BINDER: Well, not very involved, I suppose.

DSG: With the National Student Lobby, and...

BINDER: Yeah, I was somewhat involved in that, and in the Texas Intercollegiate Students' Association; we lobbied down at the Legislature--I was one of the people that lobbied successfully for the 18-year-old right to vote, right to drink, right to serve on juries.... But practically all of what I did was on campus; that's where the problems were, really. I finally had to cut my workload down to three hours; it was all I could do just to stay in school, because I was busy all the time with the student body presidency....

DSG: We've kind of talked about the efficacy of the Association, throughout all this--how much the Association was seen as the official "voice," to the extent that there is one, of the student body, from your view and from the point of view of the average student. But how about off-campus? In your State of the University address, you said, "the Legislators didn't like us."

BINDER: That was so.

DSG: Was the student government seen as the official "voice" of the students by people off campus other than the Legislature--the City Council, and so on?

BINDER: Yes and no.

DSG: How much weight did it carry?

BINDER: It would have carried a lot if they'd have liked what we'd been saying [laughing]. If they agreed with you, it was very important. That really sums up, I might add, the regents' view of student government--when they agreed with us, it was great. That's why students had the powers that they had when I came; that's why certain things had gotten signed before--because they agreed with what the students were doing. When they disagreed with us, things began to change....

I would meet with Frank Erwin at the Forty Acres Club, it was called then; and...[there was a legislator there]...who would detail how the Legislature hated students and hated me; they backed Frank Erwin, and if we ever forced it to a showdown down there--and I feel confident he told me the God's-honest truth--we'd be cut off from funds in a second. Or quicker.

DSG: To kind of sum up your administration: what would you consider to be the one or two outstanding accomplishments of the Binder Administration?

BINDER: Well, that's very, very hard to say.

DSG: What lasting mark did you leave?

BINDER: The biggest single accomplishment has to be, as far as anything of lasting value, was keeping the Daily Texan editor from being appointed; to leave that an elected position.

DSG: Through student government lobbying of the regents...?

BINDER: No; it was from hiring an attorney and fighting them in court, which we did. I mean, that was a no-holds-barred, gloves-off brawl...

DSG: And you won it, evidently.

BINDER: We won the first hearing in court. If we'd gone all the way, we might have won; I don't know if we could've gone all the way. We eventually signed a compromise agreement--a very complicated situation, but essentially what happened was, I was the chairman of the board of Texas Student Publications, INCORPORATED. The regents were not on this "corporate" board. The printing presses were in the name of the corporation, and I had the right to remove the printing presses if I so wanted. Baylor [?] did; and I had the votes. The regents did not have votes on the board, so I had the right to take those presses out and move them somewhere else. Somewhat of a haul: I mean, we're talking about \$600,000 worth of printing presses. This was somewhat of a hollow threat, because I studied every other student newspaper which had gone off campus--now, they hadn't taken the presses with them, but they'd gone off campus and put out their papers, and all of them died within

three or four years. Students absolutely, positively stayed behind them the first year or two; they died because students couldn't get credit for working on the paper any more once they were off campus, and the faculty wasn't willing to donate their time as part of a teaching deal.... There were four in the country that had done that at the time, and all four after three to four years were under, and the campus newspaper was the one that survived. So I wasn't aiming to do that.

The agreement we finally reached was that the presses would become jointly owned by the University of Texas and the non-profit corporation; that the non-profit corporation would continue to have its members elected by the students; that the presses could not be sold without the concurrence of both parties--that protected the regents, but it also protected us against being name only; and that the Daily Texan editor would continue to be elected, and that could not be changed without the concurrence of both parties. You know, people who wanted us to win outright say we lost; people who watched it very closely say we won.... I think preserving the independence of the Daily Texan was the single biggest achievement in most people's eyes.

In my own eyes, the things that I'm proudest of are one, not having violence during the demonstrations, but on the other hand, having this free flow of ideas that Justices Frankfurter, Brandeis, and Holmes have always talked about as being the solution to things you don't like to hear--more free speech, not less. The regents have lost that lesson somewhere along the way. But to me, it was living with those principles, and living with a government that tried to do--we may not have done--what the students wanted, but we tried as hard as we knew how. And I think we did do a good job, as exemplified by the surge of interest in student government. That, and just standing up to the regents for the students--like on the wage/price freeze or whatever--just standing up to them, and doing it. I mean, it's not the easiest thing in the world, and looking back on it today, if I had known how powerful for sure Frank Erwin and the rest were, I don't know if I'd have been able to do it, if I'd ever had any concept of the awesome power that these people had.... But just doing that, and representing the interests of the students. I've told many, many student governments since, that the only way to have a student government is to one, work with the Texan and get good press--that means swallowing your pride sometimes--and two, representing the students and letting them know that you're representing them, and three, doing what you think the students want, just as aggressively as you can, without asking permission from the Board of Regents or the administration. Once you get into the "May I..." thing, it's OK as long as you're doing what they want; but the power to say yes is also the power to say no, and that became eminently clear.

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DSG: Let me ask you now, as I warned you I would, to look ahead at what you see for the new Students' Association. They've gone through their first term in the Senate; we're going to elect new officers tomorrow. Do you think student government is even a feasible exercise on a campus of almost 50,000?

BINDER: Oh, absolutely. Even with limited powers, there should

be student government; and they ought to do it for a variety of reasons. One, just having the power implies the ability to expand. It's a foothold. I think the regents can legitimately buy and sell oil property in Florida and New Mexico and West Texas; that IS their job, and the students just don't have the time to devote to that. But the students DO have the time to devote to student affairs, and what better time to start preparing for adulthood than in college? One of the things the University of Texas does is provide political leaders for the state, and future business leaders, and leaders of all kinds; and they need responsibility to do this. Of course students are going to make mistakes--they don't start in their chemistry classes with every experiment perfect the first time; they don't start in mathematics classes not making any mistakes on their formulas; and they shouldn't be expected in student government, either: the solution is to vote 'em out.

The Students' Association should continue, and if it were me advising it, I would say that they should, at least for now, consolidate their power, so to speak--whatever power they've got. Look over very thoroughly, and make sure that they represent the students on whatever issues there may be on campus. I don't know what the campus issues of today are, or if there are any.

It doesn't have to be adversary; that just happened to be what it was at our point in time. Student government has been responsible for a number of things in the past: Gregory Gymnasium was an innovation in its day, although [laughing] today it's hard to believe, and this was a student government project. The Student Union was initiated by student government. I prefer, I might add, the term "student government": it was called the Students' Association in our charter, and I, unilaterally--not me, but me and the Student Senate--changed the name to Student Government, because we thought it was more descriptive of what we did and were intending to do; not just a club...

DSG: Did the students see it as a self-governing process?

BINDER: I hope so. They were electing a president... That's what we intended, and that's what I ran on...

DSG: The reason I ask you is this: the emphasis on student government, not only here, but all over the country, is not really so much self-government, but more student participation in policy-making.

BINDER: O.K....

DSG: And that's why I'm interested in that you called it Student Government; I mean, it's always been loosely termed "student government," but to put that kind of emphasis on it....

BINDER: Well, we did change the name, and that's how we printed our stationery, during that brief period of time; I don't know when it went back to "Students' Association." Some subsequent president did that; but again, we didn't ask permission to do that. I saw it as student government. Obviously, we didn't have a lot of the authority that

governments have; but we did have some authority that governments do, regardless of who did it, whether it was the regents or us. Students were taxed...by the student services fee.... They did have the right to hold elections, and everybody on the campus could vote in them. It did make appointments. The Student Court, which decided certain student issues, had limited jurisdiction; but nevertheless, it HAD jurisdiction; it does have the final say in those areas.

It has a number of hallmarks of government. For example, the appointments that were made to faculty committees were absolute within the student government; they're not subject to approval. I might add that the administration and the regents were always pressing and did ask for approval, or for us to submit our appointments--like we'd submit three appointments and they'd pick one, or conversely, they'd give us a list from which to select, but one way or the other, they would have a say in it; and again, I absolutely, positively refused to do that.

Well, I do feel that "government" is the correct way to put it. Yeah, if you want to find out how the administration views the Students' Association today, change their name to "Student Government" and send that over for approval--just a simple name change; no other functional changes but the name. I'll bet you, umm, something reasonable [laughing], that they will not approve that. On the other hand, I don't know that the students would care, today, either. There have to be issues around which to coalesce.... I was fortunate, or unfortunate, at that particular historical point in time that I was student body president, that there were some very, very important issues of the day, and the very fabric of what we believed in as a nation wasn't restricted to the campuses: it was being torn; our institutions were being changed; and it was a time of change in perception of where the individual fits into society.

You made an interesting point earlier, about "...to the extent that anyone can be the 'voice' of the students." That's absolutely impossible, to be the voice of the students.

DSG: At least, on a campus this big.

BINDER: On our campus. It is impossible to be the voice of all Texans, too; it is impossible to be the voice of all Americans. These are not humanly possible positions, so we do the best we can with what we've got; we don't say "It's impossible to be the voice of all America, so let's not have a President"; we don't say "It's impossible to be the voice of all Texans, so let's not have a Governor; let's wander around in chaos instead. Let's not be represented." People have always chosen to be represented partially than not represented at all, and I think the student body president--I also used the term "student body president" instead of "Students' Association president" to underscore that my job was not to speak for the Association or the Senate; that's not where my loyalty was. My job was to speak for the student body of the University of Texas. And the critics may say I didn't do a good job with that; I personally take pride in what I did, and I think I did, but that's certainly open to dispute. But the point is, that's how I perceived my job, and that's how I perceive it for whoever is elected as student body president--it's



to speak out, on whatever may be the issues. Those were the issues of my day; those don't have to be the issues of today....

DSG: As I told you, tomorrow we're going to elect new officers. Say on Thursday, our new president were to come and sit down here where I am now, and say, "Bob, I'm kind of new at this; our Association's kind of new. You've been there; you've seen a lot of the throes of student government. What one suggestion would you give me to help me do my job well, and help me make the Association really a viable entity again," what would you tell him?

BINDER: Follow your conscience, and don't back down. There is no better advice I could give anyone than that. Don't listen to their rules and their mumbo-jumbo and their BB-stacking and all the reasons they give you why you can't do it. Just follow your instincts and your conscience, and don't back down.

**SANDY KRESS****January 3, 1983**

*I conducted my first interview with Sandy Kress, who was President of the UT Students' Association 1973-1974. Kress' administration is considered by some to be exemplary of what an effective student government can accomplish at Texas; his term constituted the final peak of student interest and participation in the Association before its decline and eventual abolition. Kress, now an attorney with Johnson & Swanson of Dallas, is very much in favor of the current attempts to revive the campus government, and has followed relatively closely the events toward this end over the last few years. After I brought him up to date on the very recent developments in structuring the new government, we focused on the same subject during his administration:*

DSG: One of the first things I wanted to ask you about was the structure before you took over, and during your term.

KRESS: Well, I really don't want to be critical of my predecessors, because there were a few of them who I thought were really outstanding student leaders. The real problem with student government at Texas before I came, I thought, was that the structure was not such that a lot of things could get done; people spent a lot of time in constitutional revision committees--everything was done on sort of an "ad hoc" basis; there was very little that was done that was a structured, formal, and organized sort of effort. So what I decided I wanted to do was really to make student government a much broader organization--to bring a lot of people into the process and get them to working on projects in a systematic way that would benefit the students. So the first thing that I really wanted to do, and what I ran my campaign on, was trying to set up a substantial number of committees that would address specific problems and try to perform specific services for students. It seemed to me that making student government more of an ongoing, stable, broad-based apparatus--that in itself would not only improve the quality of student government, but also permit a substantially greater number of students to participate in it.

DSG: Were those committees composed of Senate members?

KRESS: Both.

DSG: That was the Senate Reorganization Act?

KRESS: The Senate Reorganization Act was the act that created the structure that I'm describing. What it did was it created committees that were essentially headed up by senators, but permitted non-senators to participate as members of the committee. So in effect, senators would exert their leadership in the committee, and then bring the results of the committee work to the full Senate for approval as required. And people who were not really interested in running for office, or who were freshmen, or who had just come to campus, or who didn't have the

political strength to run for office, still could get involved in student affairs by serving on these committees. Let's say for example someone just had it in their mind that they wanted to create a program--and this happened; this is indeed a true story--someone wanted to create a Washington internship program; so they came to the Student Services Fee Committee and said "I've got an idea, let's work on it." And they would work on it in committee, and try to generate support; if they needed support from the full Senate or from the President, as they did, they could do it. They had an idea and could implement it; they weren't a senator and didn't really want to get involved in student politics particularly--if they just wanted to get something done, they could come and serve on that committee. So there were both senators and non-senators who participated, which is one of the things that I really wanted to foster--something the new student government, all student governments should try to foster--which is as broad-based participation as possible in the affairs of student government.

DSG: What about the executive branch? David Bright has said that you organized a "voluntary administrative branch"; is that more or less what you've been talking about? What did he mean by that?

KRESS: Well, I'm not exactly sure what he meant by that.... There were a lot of people who advised or helped me who had no formal function in student government....I tried to have people advising in all areas; there were a couple of people who served on the University Council with me, and I took the approach that all of us should take a consistent sort of position and represent the student view on the University Council, rather than just being individuals serving on the University Council--and I took that perspective in whatever activity in which we were involved. Maybe that's what David meant: we had a lot of people in the law school and other places in a special capacity to help me do whatever it was, and I would consider their efforts voluntary; I would consider all of that part of the administration of student government. I had a couple of administrative assistants who organized a lot of that, and who got some sort of compensation from the University, and they were functioning to get certain things done that we'd proposed; we had a person who was financial director; and all of these people helped me build that machinery, and I call it the administrative machinery...most of it was voluntary.

DSG: You mentioned a minute ago appointments to the University committees and boards and so forth. As far as the appointment of students to the student seats on these committees, how much influence did the student government have? Did you recommend them to the President [of the University], and was it a rubber stamp from there? How did it work?

KRESS: It varied. In some cases it was a final appointment; in some cases we submitted names to the President. It was pretty much of a pro forma deal--pretty much the names that we recommended were the names that were appointed, as far as student representatives were concerned. I think that's a very desirable way for it to be.

DSG: Did that give students a lot of input on the University boards?

KRESS: Well, it gave us some representation. It was never as coordinated as I wanted it to be, but I would like to think that it was more coordinated than it had ever been before. One of the problems with that system was that you would appoint your students, and then they would have no kind of ongoing relationship with the Student Senate and President. I tried to keep as much of an ongoing relationship as I could, because I viewed those not just as individual students--this is critical--I viewed those representatives as not just individual students who had a responsibility that they could go off on their own to meet; but rather as representative responsibilities...to represent the interests of the student body as manifested through the student government. I always thought, and I would certainly recommend, that if any student government is going to be influential at all, that it keep some kind of rein on those people, those students who are selected to represent students in all the various spheres of University life.

DSG: What about the funding battle? I have a picture here, from the [1974 Cactus] yearbook, of Frank Erwin....

KRESS: I was talking when he was sleeping; you know that, don't you? That was a political deal. He did that several times.... I remember I was speaking before the regents on the issue of the building fee--there was a dramatic increase in the building use fee when I was president, which I opposed--we found out about it at the last minute, and drove all night down to Galveston for the regents' meeting to oppose it. They wouldn't let us get on the agenda, because we hadn't asked to be put on the agenda one week in advance. Of course, we came back--I'm sure they thought we were a bunch of smart alecks--but we came back and said "It was rather hard to ask to be put on the agenda one week ago when nobody, outside the Board of Regents, knew that the building use fee was going to be increased. We didn't have the problem a week ago!" Well, they thought it was a compelling point, and at that time the regents made the decision to always permit a student government president to speak freely at a University [Regents'] Board meeting.

Anyway, while I was making this protest, Erwin realized that I was making a good point.... Most times when I spoke, I thought I was reasonably effective, and he pulled this stunt every once in awhile.

DSG: Was he really sleeping?

KRESS: No--it was just a way to intimidate the speaker. He did it as a way of saying, "I could care less what you're saying." He pulled that stunt several times. It didn't much affect me; it kind of got me mad; but some other people would be intimidated by that.

DSG: What was the story behind cutting off the mandatory funding [for the Students' Association] and going to an optional basis?

KRESS: Well, I don't know...that happened really after I was president. During my year, student government was a mandatorily funded entity, and I think this may have happened near the end of '74, after Frank [Fleming]

came into office. There was always a minority of students who didn't like mandatory fees....

DSG: It was just a dollar, wasn't it?

KRESS: I don't recall exactly what it was, but it was nominal. There were a lot of students who didn't like it--I remember there were letters in the Texan during my term, because we would do one thing or another, and you're never going to have everybody liking what you're doing, and people would say, "Well, I don't like that and I shouldn't have to contribute to it," that sort of stuff. That was part of it; part of it I think was that student government never got particularly effective or controversial. All through the history of student government, you'll find that there's always a move to either take it off the fee or whatever, and the same thing is true of Texas. Now whether that was part of what contributed to it, I don't know. Maybe they perceived that student government was weak--that's the stage at which they made that effort--and nobody would much object. I really don't know what it was that went through the administrative arm at the time that led in that direction, but those are some of the things that may have been part of it.

DSG: In a paper that David Bright wrote, advocating the return of student government, in 1980, he charged that the regents and the administration were out to "fractionalize students, divide power, create competing factions and take away the Students' Association's money--basically, reducing it to the status of any other campus organization." Did you get that feeling when you were president? As far as cooperation with the regents, did you feel that they were out to get you and the Students' Association?

KRESS: Not particularly, not when I was president; but I think what David's saying has an air of truth to it. There certainly were things that were done that limited student government power, generally before the time I got there. The creation of the Senior Cabinet clearly in my judgement was an effort to rip away the power that student government ought to have. There's no reason at all for there to be a Senior Cabinet separate and apart from student government--none at all.

DSG: It wasn't created during your term.

KRESS: No, it was created after Jeff Jones' term. And it was created basically at a time when student government was weak, and the idea was to create an alternative structure that would forever compete with student government in an area where student government should have been more active, and always should have been more active, and that is education and the improvement of the academic life at the University as far as students are concerned. The creation of a separate Union Board was clearly an effort to do that. And then there are things that students did themselves: separately voting for membership on the Co-op Board.... All of these things, in my view, were actions that were taken that limited the real power of student government. There was constantly that battle. The battle over the independence of funding, what you could do with that funding, that came up during Jeff Jones' term, and was a carryover into mine.

My predecessor, very craftily (Dick Benson, for whom I have a great deal of respect) created funding sources that were in effect independent from the University; they were very, very important to my term, and I owe a great deal to him. We were particularly effective in my term because of some steps Dick Benson had taken.

He created two programs that created a pot of money for us that we were able to use with relative independence. One of them was a movie program, where we would show movies on campus, and we generated quite a lot of revenue for use in student programs as determined by the student government. The second was a student insurance program; both very viable services that benefitted the students themselves and at the same time provided a source of independent funding for student government. Now we had a very funny relationship with the University at the time on these programs: those were programs that we continued to have control over, and even though the mandatory fee money that we brought in had to be used for only specific purposes, the other monies could be used for whatever we wanted. So we really didn't have much problem, frankly, with funding in my term...but because of these long-standing battles with the administration, there were various functions that were performed by other student entities that in an ideal setting probably ought to be performed by student government; and if performed by student government, would probably lead to a very powerful entity--the kind that students would really look to as a substantial administrative entity.

DSG: All right, let me ask you this then: as far as Frank Erwin goes, not to say anything bad about the man, but do you think that he just didn't care about student government--did he want to pretend that it didn't exist--or do you think he was making, or later made, a deliberate attempt to sabotage it?

KRESS: Let me say this about Erwin...maybe it's easier because the man's gone, and I'm older, and I'm gone too, in a way; I'm gone from the campus at least--I have tremendous respect for Erwin. I wish there was still an Erwin around.

DSG: He's always painted as a bad guy...

KRESS: Well, he was a bad guy in a lot of ways. But let me tell you this: we weren't electing Hank the Hallucination while he was there. Erwin helped create an image for student government in my view that was positive. Students always understood that there was an issue; Erwin made the University an exciting place. He fought hard for his interests, which in many cases were not the interests of the students, I didn't think (and I still don't). I think he was wrong in a lot of respects, but there was no question that he was passionate and cared deeply about the University and fought for the University; and in that passion, and in that emotion, he created a lot of issues--a lot of issues would fly out from his activity that, I think, led to a very substantial debate in the University about what ought to be done to improve the University, with respect to students, and so forth. I get the impression that a lot of those things just aren't discussed now at all; and, I'll tell you, I'd prefer that environment to the current environment. And in that environment, student government was

easier because of the heat of all that activity. It was easier for students I think, to perceive that they had an interest in the University, and as a result of that interest, that they should be taking stands and be involved in all that--which I think is a whole lot better, frankly, than maybe the kind of attitude that exists these days. So in that sense, I think Erwin was good.

DSG: He created controversy which stimulated students.

KRESS: Absolutely. And he created an environment in which people were thinking about "What ought to be done here?" Now, in some respects, his policies were wrong, I think; we fought them. He recognized that there was a student government; he did battle with us; he tried to ignore us on occasion--sleep through our passionate pleas, or even pretend to--he'd do battle with us in the Legislature: but that's the way it ought to be. I mean, that's a whole lot healthier, I think, than not having the battle joined, and then having things just "move along", or apathy, or mediocrity, or whatever it is. We had a hot debate, and that was healthy. The people who went up against Erwin will never regret going up against Erwin--if you were to talk to David Powell, who was editor of the paper, [Dick] Benson--all those guys I'm sure would say that they appreciate the opportunity to be able to "cut their teeth" on Frank Erwin as student leaders...as people. When we called HEW in to look at the pretty poor performance the University had in attracting minority students and minority faculty, we were engaged in a very significant battle with Frank Erwin. And he knew we were there, and he frankly was afraid of what we were doing.

In answer to your question--I guess I've been beating around the bush--I think Erwin knew that student government was there; I think when it was effective, he knew that he was involved in a battle; he enjoyed it, student leaders enjoyed it; it would often get very nasty; it was basically healthy--the stronger we were, the better it was; and sometimes he would try to take out his frustrations by cutting student government's power back. Generally, it may have taken us a little more time--we were weaker than he was--but in many instances we came back and fought hard. Overall, I think he knew about it and it was a very healthy relationship.

DSG: With what sorts of campus-related issues, besides those you've mentioned already, did the Students' Association concern itself?

KRESS: Well, during my term, we tried to focus on a broad range of issues that concern the student as a citizen of the University, and a citizen of the city, the state, and the country. We didn't really want to leave anything aside; we tried to look at all of the issues, and we thought that because of the committee structure, we could effectively do so. One thing that was central, I thought, was the provision of student services. There were just a lot of things that students wanted to have, and most of the services that were currently provided on campus--most people don't know this--were originally created by student government: this Washington internship program, the shuttle bus program, the health center way back when was originally created by students; in our year, the foreign study program was created by student government; various kinds of travel programs the insurance program, the movie program--all of those things were begun--

various programs with merchants in the Austin community that would give students various kinds of discounts and so forth--all of those things were done by student government, and I think that's a function of student government. We tried to represent the students in city government, because they had needs--they were citizens of Austin, they were voting in Austin--we took control of the city council when we were in office, and a lot of interests the students had in terms of their needs as residents of Austin were answered. We took our concerns to the Legislature; in our year the legislative delegation from Austin was 100% pro-student, and that gave Frank Erwin fits. We elected a state Senator; we elected four state reps who were all sympathetic to student interests. We increased faculty pay that year; the penalty against possession of marijuana was reduced to probably a more appropriate misdemeanor penalty; and other interests that we had were represented through our state lobby activity. We even got changes at the federal level: pushing for the Big Thicket National Park, pushing to end the war in Cambodia; we joined with other student groups across the country to lobby for a couple of those things, and I think we were effective in doing that. We were concerned about minority representation on campus; we were interested in the Constitutional Convention which took place that year; we were interested in general University issues--student participation in the selection of deans, or department heads; library hours were expanded--there were a whole host of political resolutions that we entertained; student economic power, trying to arrange understandings with merchants that would help students in terms of their economic clout; the University neighborhood, and how it was affected by roads, road proposals, and so forth. All kinds of things, really a vast array of issues that affected students in whatever way were the kinds of things that came onto our plate.

DSG: What about the addition of new courses? That was mentioned briefly in one of the articles in the '74 Cactus...that your administration had been instrumental in initiating some new courses and also in achieving academic reform.

KRESS: Well, I'll be frank with you. I don't think we did as much in that area as we wanted to. There were some new course ideas; we did promote certain ideas of academic reform, some interdisciplinary approaches, that were taken. But David, I'll be straight with you; I think we probably did less in the area of academic reform and the area of education itself than we did in any other area that we undertook. I think we were almost phenomenally successful in almost every other committee area, but education was a weak spot, and I don't know why. It is harder to deal with; it is harder for student politicians to deal with; I think the division between the Student Senate and the Senior Cabinet is not healthy at all...it certainly isn't healthy for student government, and I don't think it's healthy for Senior Cabinet either. I think if there were some way for Senior Cabinet to have its current function preserved, but to be brought in as the education committee of the student government, and have some sort of tie together, I think it would be much better for everyone. I think that while we did some things, and we were proud of some of our accomplishments, we still didn't do as much as we wanted to.



DSG: In the inquiry that I addressed to the other universities, I asked the administrators to evaluate how much influence the student government has in administrative policy decisions, particularly those that concern students, and how much of student-related legislation is initiated by student government and then passed on the administrative level. It seems to me from what you're saying that during your term our Students' Association was very effective in that regard.

KRESS: Well, I think we were more effective in creating student services. We were more effective in representing student interests before all the legislative bodies in which students had an interest. We were more effective in those two areas than we were in affecting University policy. That's fairly clear, although I think we were more effective in determining University policy than most student governments had been as of that time. But there were several University policies, whether it was the ability to represent your interests to the Board of Regents, or making some changes in terms of key selections in the academic community--deans and committee/department heads; dorm hours was an area that we took on and made some progress at. Again, I want to suggest that in the intra-University world, where it is largely academic, we had less success than we did in any of our other endeavors; that includes University policies themselves. Another place where we tried to have some effect, and I think we only came out with limited success, was the propensity of the University to spend all of its energy building new buildings and, in our view, allocating less to quality--to faculty pay, to improvement of the academic life and so forth. We had some impact; the new Performing Arts Center with its new large hall--that was a priority of ours. The faculty had wanted to have several small halls; they didn't want to have a main auditorium. We fought that, hard...that was an issue where we and Frank Erwin joined together--and won. We tried to look at some of the other building proposals, and thought that those funds would be better used to improve the quality of education, rather than the quantity, the size of the campus; and I think that generally, we had limited success in those areas. That was a much, much harder area, and although we had some successes, that was not our best effort.

DSG: Do you think that the role of student government, specifically the UT student government, should be more concerned with, or should concentrate its efforts more on off-campus (extra-University) issues, or should it try to weight its efforts equally--that and University policy--or should it lean more towards University policy--what should the role be?

KRESS: That's a very important question. I think that a student government should try to address all phases of student life. I think a student government doing that will find that the doors are opened more easily in terms of student services and what you're calling extra-University affairs. Now remember, "extra-University affairs" is not just extra-University: we were able to promote, for example, a scholarship program for needy students--an intra-University result--by going outside the University and bringing HEW in, or going to the Constitutional Convention, and demanding that something be done to make educational opportunities available to all Texans. So a lot of times we'd use the extra-University route where we were more powerful, to come in and get something done intra-University.

I think the student government needs to recognize its principal power is its numbers, its voting strength, and its time and creativity. It will have more effect, it will be able to do more for students, by creating student services that are useful; by getting involved in the extra-University world it will be able to get things done for students that students want done, there's no question about it. And for that reason alone, student government ought to exist.

But I think a student government also has to be more creative and more effective at doing things within the University than student government has been in the past. And that is not an easy process. Once student government gets these programs going that I've just suggested, I think the officials do need to think out how they can play a more effective role inside the University: by using their appointments process better, by trying to reorganize student institutions--Senior Cabinet, student government--so that they can deliver more effectively, and bring people into student government who have some understanding of academic reform--to bring to bear good ideas that need to be implemented. And then find effective ways of building coalitions with either faculty or administrators to get things done that will be in the students' interest. That battle is the most difficult battle of any of them. It's easier for students to go to the Legislature and get legislation than it is to make changes in the University environment because the University environment is just extremely conservative--I don't mean politically conservative, but just that it doesn't move very fast.

I've been long-winded again; my bottom line is that student government ought to pursue all of these areas and recognize that they'll be more successful with respect to those first two things that I mentioned, and then the other battle, which needs to be waged, is just going to be tougher, longer-term, and is not going to produce the results quite as quickly.

DSG: In the past couple of semesters, it seems from the letters in "Firing Line" by some of the people who oppose student government, that there's a very large sentiment on campus that a student government cannot really represent accurately the views of its constituency. To what degree do you think that sentiment existed during your term?

KRESS: Oh, I think there's always, in every governmental body, a substantial feeling that that body cannot represent their interests very well. I just think that's generally true. It was probably true before I was elected, and it probably to some substantial extent was true even at the end of our term. [Vice-President] Cappy McGarr and I and most people in the Senate would like to think that we had a pretty effective term. It's a tough job--I mean, you have no tax power, you're not really a government: you don't pass laws that affect people. Most people come to the University and they have a job to do; they want to get a degree and move on. People are coming in and coming out all the time, so they don't have any time to respect any institution there very much. It's not like the CEC [Cultural Entertainment Committee], which I headed, with a several hundred thousand dollar budget, and you're constantly making people happy. It's a tough job, and the people who are having to head it up are young, and fairly inexperienced; and it is hard, I think, for people to believe that there's

any value in the institution; they come in and say, "I don't think they can effectively or accurately represent me or do things for me." I think that feeling always exists, and I think the job of a student government is to try to cut against it as best it can by performing well; by getting things done; by representing student interests. When these students went together to the Legislature last year and prevented a tuition increase--there is no question that that concerted student effort was able to do something for students that students individually could not do on their own. Period. End of paragraph. There's no doubt about it.

When we created programs that were useful to students, when we got the Legislature to pay attention to the University or to grant a pay increase for faculty members, when we created the University Day Care Center--whatever we did in our view was an effort that contributed to the betterment of student life. The people who benefitted from it recognized that we had done things in their interest, and that it was useful. But it is an uphill struggle. Student government will do things, if it is run at all properly, that are in the students' interests, and most students will come around to understand it if they're confronted with it. But they're always going to be confronted with people who say, "Why have it? What good does it do me? They're not really representing my interests." That's always a problem.

DSG: O.K., let me ask you this then. This is probably an extremely difficult thing for you to quantify, but put yourself in the shoes of the rank-and-file student in 1973-1974. How did the average student view his Students' Association?

KRESS: I think the average student probably didn't think much about student government. There was a lot of flurry, a lot of activity. I think the average student saw a lot about us; I think they thought something was going on. We were constantly in the news. I think they thought we were pretty energetic, we were pretty active. I think we touched the average student's life probably only minimally, because the average student again is very separate and apart from student government; they don't interrelate very much. But I think they thought of us as a fairly active and productive student government, if they were thinking about it relatively; if they weren't thinking about it relatively, they probably weren't touched much at all. I'm trying to be as fair as I can. I think we did a good job, but I suspect probably the average student knew who we were, may have known about some things that we did, may have been touched by it, but I think the nexus was relatively minimal. Even in what I thought was a relatively active year.

DSG: Take the same question from the administration's point of view, and from the point of view of those off campus, say legislators at the Capitol. Did they see the student government as the "official voice of the students" at the University?

KRESS: Much more so, I think, than people think they did. I think in our year, people in the Legislature had a great deal of respect for us. Maybe I'm wrong; but we were up there all the time, they treated us with respect; they often did what we asked them to do; our numbers impressed

them; our ability to get people sympathetic to our cause elected to the Legislature meant something....I don't think they cared all that much--they knew we were a transient body, that is, outside of Austin; I think the four Austin representatives cared about who we were. They were somewhat impressed--I'm going to get to a conclusion in a second, here; all of these questions have led me to a point I want to make.

I think administrators knew who we were, and I think the administrators knew what student government was. I think they wanted to have a closer relationship with us than we wanted to have. There were a lot of times that [University President] Stephen Spurr wished we would come and do business with him, and there were a lot of times when we just refused to, because we either wanted to get around him, or we didn't think he'd deal in good faith, or whatever. We knew [Vice-President] Ron Brown, and we talked to him a great deal...I think they knew who we were. I think they also knew that we'd be gone in a year; again, they knew what our weaknesses were. But I think they had some appreciation for the ability of student government to get people organized, to cause trouble, to get things done, to go around their backs to the regents, or to the Legislature.

The point I want to make is this, and David, this is a fundamental point, that I think is as important as anything else I'm going to tell you: a lot of what I was trying to do, and the committee structure, addresses the fundamental weakness that students always have, and that is a weakness that I want you to understand clearly through the answers to your last two questions. The fundamental weakness that students have is that they're young, they're inexperienced, and they're mobile, in transit--and everybody knows it. Students know it, administrators know it, legislators know it. Those weaknesses make it very difficult for you to have a meaningful and effective student government. Now, how do you respond to that problem? You can respond to it by not having one, by just saying, "it's too weak," "we don't care," "they never do anything for us": just forget it, that's one response. The other response is just kind of let it happen ad hoc: "Well, we'll have a student government, and if anything bad happens, they'll be there to protect us." There you have the debate. Student government is probably more worthwhile than it's not. I have been through enough student government experiences, both at Berkeley and at Texas, to conclude that what students ought to strive to do is more than that. Not kick it in the teeth, not just have it around, but create an institution that has a life to it, that has power to it, that will serve over time to counter the weaknesses that any student organization will have. And I don't know if it can be done; I've never really seen it effectively done. That is, for two, three, four, or five years, an institution built up; at Berkeley it was that way, in some respects, and at Texas it's been that way in some respects. If students could be patient about it, and if student leaders could be far-sighted about it, to create a committee system, to create an institution that could serve effectively to represent students' interests, and just start building on itself; so that someone comes in as a freshman and goes to work on a student committee, gets excited about it, understands the process; runs for Senate as a sophomore or junior, gets elected to the Senate, serves in that capacity; then runs for President or Vice-President or some other administrative position in their senior year. They will have spent four years contri-

buting, and learning, and understanding, and building a system that has the effect of bringing a lot of people into it early on and then letting them learn from the process, and then serve and use their experience at the end of it.

If you had a system that could do that, student government at the end of five or six years would be a very, very effective entity, because it would have institutional strengths to it; it would have institutional knowledge. That's what makes something powerful--if you've got institutional knowledge. If someone had the respect, if student leaders could create that kind of entity, if students could give it enough time and patience, and people could do it seriously, they could create an entity that would be very influential over time. And then, at the end of five years, if someone were to come and ask the question that you've just asked me--"what do students think about it?"--students would say, "That's part of my life. I contribute my time to it; I contribute my effort and energy to it. And yes, I know about student government: they've been around, and my friends are participating in it..." and so forth and so on. What would legislators say? They'd say, "Yes, they're very effective and well organized; they come up here and present their views; they coordinate with other students across the state; they've got a built-in, organized program." Administrators would say, "We've got to deal with it, because it's an institution on our campus--just like we've got to deal with the faculty," and so forth. Until students create an institution that lives longer than they live, because they have the shortest lifespan in the University environment--they're the first fish to go; the faculty are going to be around a lot longer; the administration's going to be around a lot longer, and has more delegated power.... I think that's a fundamental issue.

.....

Obviously, it all starts from the basic appreciation of the fact that students need to perceive themselves as citizens of a community, for however short a period of time it is. If students don't do that, this thing doesn't get built. Student leaders have got to go out and say, "Look, this is our community for at least four years, and we ought to have some role in shaping it." And once people get committed to that idea--they need to be brought in basically on a "ask not what your University can do for you; but what you can do for your community while you're here" basis: bring them in, get them to start contributing, and do so for a period of years--if that kind of institution can be built up, you wouldn't be asking me these questions.

And what we have now, David, is basically opinions: they write letters to the newspapers, or they talk, or they vote; I'm saying on the basis of experiences that I've seen, and I don't think it's an opinion, I think it's a fact: that if students would take that leap of faith, and commit their time and their energy to an institution and build that institution, over a matter of years, that institution would have tremendous power, both in the University environment, and in the environment of Austin that affects student lives.

DSG: What happened between 1974 and 1978? Why was student government abolished?

KRESS: Well, that's clearly an opinion; that's speculative....

DSG: What factors do you think caused students to lose their faith in the government?

KRESS: I think there were a lot of factors. I think there were a series of disappointments that basically assaulted students, year after year. And I have some respect for some of the people who succeeded me; I just don't think somehow that they were able to deliver. And the disappointments were all across the lot. At the end of those four years, you couldn't be in any part of the political spectrum in the student community and not have been disappointed, because the students tried every part of that spectrum: they had a Frank Fleming, which I would say would be all the way over to the most conservative side; then they had a Carol Crabtree--she had been part of our group, a woman, more moderate--people looked to that; then you had Adkins and Slyfield, which was the most radical, seemingly anarchic--I mean, here you never really had had Austin experimenting with that; it wasn't just left wing; it was anarchy, it wasn't any kind of systems approach to it, it wasn't Marxist, it was complete anarchy. So the students tried all of these things, and I think at the end of those experiences they said, "We tried it all, and not a one of them did much of any enduring quality. We reacted from one, to the other; we went all across the board, and we really couldn't find what we wanted, it all climaxing in Adkins and Slyfield. We tried it all; it doesn't mean anything; so why have it around?" I think that's part of it; that's just some speculation on my part.... Part of it is that the student movement, whatever it was, nationally was dying out during that period of time, and that clearly affected it; students were becoming much more private in the '60s and early '70s, and that clearly affected it--that may be the overriding issue, generally; that may have created an environment in which these disappointments could really trigger that kind of disenchantment, a sufficient disenchantment to end the thing. I think the student institution itself was given the responsibilities it should have, and its opportunities; I think the institution of student government was relatively weak. We had tried to strengthen it during a few years, but I don't think it was a lasting kind of thing. We talked about a few things already: the regents had "divided and conquered," as David wrote; in some respects that hurt. I don't think there was enough of a feeling in the administration itself that there had to be a permanent role for student government, and I think student government was weak from that standpoint.

DSG: Was it weakened further by having control of the student services fee removed?

KRESS: I think that's probably right. I think that was a bad, bad decision; that was a serious mistake. There has to be a commitment on the part of the administration, no matter what this group does, that this institution will go on. If they elect a president who's a crackpot, or is a criminal, we'll just have to take care of him as an individual; but assaulting the institution, which the administration did on occasion, was a bad mistake, and I think contributed to the weakness of the institution. So, in effect, you might have a couple of years where we tried to rebuild

it, where we appeared strong, but once student leaders who were trying to do that were gone, and then they left them without a mandatory fee, which really bound the students together and provided the funding to keep the institution going--a couple of secretaries, if nothing else, and space--all of that clearly contributed to it. I'd say those three factors were the principal reasons for the demise, and not necessarily in the order in which I mentioned them.

DSG: I guess in conclusion, then, what prospects do you see for us now? We currently have a structure, we have a president and a Student Senate and committees, we don't have control over the student services fee, we don't have a mandated funding...what prospects do you see for us now? Where do we go from here? What do we have to do to make it last?

KRESS: Well, I would say that the first few years are going to be very tender, in my judgement. If students come forward who take this possibility seriously, and exercise responsibilities well, and do a good job in these first couple of years, I think the prospects are reasonably good. The fact that you're coming here to write this kind of paper is a very good sign that people are trying to figure out "what needs to be done here?", and from an academic, a scholarly point of view, I think that's outstanding; I think what you're doing is a very, very healthy sign; I mean it. What David Bright did--I think David Bright played a very critical role in bringing this thing back; he had a lot of energy; and he had Amy Johnson, that helped him too; and Jim [McCormack], and David Weiser--these are some very capable people. But I think a serious interest on the part of students in making this thing work, and a few students coming forward and spending a lot of their energy trying to make it happen--if that happens, my thought is that the prospects are reasonably good. If that doesn't happen, my thoughts are that the prospects are, if not bad, at least uncertain. I've been reading The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire...you know, even in the late 200's, this place was falling apart; no way this thing could be brought back together--the Goths and the barbarians are attacking in the late 200's; I mean, you've given the Roman Empire up for good. But somehow they had a chain of four or five leaders who came from nowhere, who built the empire back up, and of course they kept the empire strong for another several centuries. It's amazing when leadership pops up; it just comes out of nowhere...a couple of bad years, and then someone comes along and really puts something into it. But I would say indeed that generally speaking, the first couple years are going to be very important.

Now what would I suggest for these people? I think it is critically important that people come forward now who can go carry the message to the students, and say, "Look. This is your community. The quality of this community depends as much on your participation as on any other single factor--your contribution. This is your chance to come forward; you can help govern this community. You've got to come in here and serve, and help us." Someone needs to go around and carry that message, and build student government up as an institution as effectively as it can, making community service something that is a viable idea, whether it's on student services committee, or lobbying committee, or education committee, or wherever people can play a role--getting people involved. I think the

student government has got to have some successes, and I think whoever is leading the student government now has to be sensitive to that. They need to produce things NOW that they can point to at the end of the year and say, "See? We were able to do these things, because we joined together." And I think that's maybe the most important thing that can happen, whether it's in the area of student services, the legislative session, in lobbying, in academic programs, in rejuvenating some of these other services that we've talked about, and so on. I think that's critical. I think very quietly, but very effectively, student leaders need to begin to deal with some fundamental institutional questions that over time really make a difference in making student government effective, such as: creating a process for student government to have some role in governing the student services fee--and I think that ought to be begun now, in this session of the Legislature, and with the administration--even if it isn't everything, complete control, some system needs to evolve that at least has the student government as the first layer of decision-making. Maybe you have Presidential veto over spending; maybe you have some other administration role as a compromise--but the student government ought to be the place where the student services fee is first looked at, at minimum; maybe ultimately, determined. If the administration insists upon having ultimate control, still, some progress needs to be made down that path.

I think the student body president needs to very seriously go talk to the head of Senior Cabinet and begin a process of merging those two institutions, without all the crap we've had in the past; without all the pride, and ambition, and inter-group rivalry, and all this other nonsense ....I think the president and the vice-president, very soberly, need to say, "Look, I don't care for myself." Maybe this current President, who's going out of power, would be an effective one to do it; and the Senior Cabinet head...

DSG: That's Julie Tindall...

KRESS: I've heard that she can be reasonable, but on the other hand, when this thing gets hot and heavy, sometimes all these people--and this was true in my time--people look at it as "my fiefdom." Well, it's time those two people sat down and said, "What can we do to make the student role in the academic process more vital?" And I think it's going to require some sort of merging of those institutions; I think the idea of a Senior Cabinet that is basically a very powerful education committee to which the student government can maybe appoint a few additional members... because I don't think academic reform is going to come just out of the current academic departments or colleges; people have interests. One of the problems with the University of Texas, I think, is that there isn't enough interdisciplinary opportunity.

DSG: Especially since [former Arts & Sciences Dean] John Silber left...

KRESS: Yes, especially since John Silber left; absolutely. They created a couple of things--Plan II, University Studies--those things are outstanding....There ought to be more experimental programs like that; serious--I'm not talking about outrageous academic programs, but serious programs that try to teach people how to think, and to read, and to read...a liberal



arts sort of setting I think is much better than this sort of cafeteria style education that currently passes for the B.A. degree. You need to have people who have that kind of interest, who can serve; and I think the idea of them sitting in a serious setting with representatives from all the colleges and talking about education only in a student government setting would be very, very healthy. I think they would all be more powerful for it.

Then there are other relationships too; but I think those fundamental issues--I mean a commitment from the administration on a mandatory fee so that students don't have to worry year to year whether they're going to have enough money for a secretary, or for the administrative assistants, and the staff, and supplies--that ought to be guaranteed by the administration for time immemorial, and some sort of commitments sought out by student leadership on that front are necessary. I think a revitalization of the authority of student government to appoint students to committees in the University, and a process by which those appointments are made that requires a continuing relationship between those students and the student government.... These are the fundamental things, I think, that can be done. And a good relationship with the Daily Texan--by sitting down and saying, "Look, this is beyond you and me"; I mean a serious commitment on the part of that student president and vice-president to try and develop that kind of relationship so that the press will help student government in promoting an image that is consistent with this progress that we're talking about. I think if student government leaders come forward who can make progress down those paths, and have a good year lobbying, and create some new student services, and make some progress in terms of these fundamental institutional developments that we've talked about, I think students will look back and say, "I'm glad we brought that into existence." And over the years, I think they'll be really delighted that they did.

*After the interview, Sandy Kress brought up one more item that he felt might have contributed to the decline and fall of student government between 1975 and 1978. This was the appointment in 1975 of then interim President Dr. Lorene Rogers as the permanent occupant of that post. The appointment of Dr. Rogers was bitterly opposed by the students and faculty with protests and demonstrations, many of them organized or at least sanctioned by the Students' Association. However, the regents did not rescind the appointment, and the students apparently felt that because they had "failed" in this effort, the student government was ineffective and should therefore be abolished. Sandy pointed out that this was a faulty conclusion: very little, if anything, can change a decision of the Board of Regents. The students stood little chance of success to begin with; their unrealistic expectations went unfulfilled, only adding to the growing disenchantment with their student government.*

## FRANK FLEMING

March 19, 1983

*In what turned out to be one of the more humorous occurrences in my research, the interview with Frank Fleming almost didn't happen. We had arranged to meet at his home in Dallas, but when I arrived there (fifteen minutes late), Frank still had not returned from a church breakfast that morning. After talking with me for some time, his wife began to worry about his absence, as she had reminded him earlier that day of our appointment. She proceeded to call every conceivable place he might have stopped on the way home, but--no Frank. Finally, after nearly an hour and a half, Jill Fleming just by luck located her husband, at a friend's home, elbow deep in a car engine: he had completely forgotten about the meeting. Shortly thereafter, needless to say, Frank walked in the door and, with a sheepish grin, went to clean up; Jill just shook her head and said, "That smile has gotten him out of more trouble since I've known him...."*

*Soon afterwards, the three of us were sitting down to discuss some of the many critical and controversial events--the suspension of mandatory student government funding, the infamous ZZ Top concert, and the firing of President Stephen Spurr, among them--that occurred during Frank Fleming's 1974-1975 term as president of the UT Students' Association.*

FLEMING [laughing]: O.K.--I'm an open book.

DSG: O.K...Sandy Kress had a fairly elaborate committee system; he made a lot of changes to it during his term. What did you inherit from Sandy as far as the committee system--did you change it? How did it work?

FLEMING: I don't know that we really made any changes in it, particularly. Sandy was the first one to come in with the idea of an elaborate committee structure as opposed to before then, when I think those things had been done more or less ad hoc--if the need arose, a committee was organized. But we saw no need to abolish any of the particular committees. After I'd appointed some people chairmen of the committees, I wished I'd abolished them [laughing]; but that's neither here nor there.

I think he went a little bit overboard on some of the committees, but it was a bold attempt by Sandy to create all these various standing committees, and it got a lot of people involved; a lot of people were looking for something to put on their resume, but then again there were a lot of workaholics that got in there and did a lot of unrewarded work just because they enjoyed doing it.

I probably couldn't even name half the committees right now; but a few stand out. Certainly Student Government Tours was one...

DSG: Wasn't that started by Carol Crabtree?

FLEMING: Carol Crabtree, and pretty much some people who wanted to

have a cheap spring break trip to Fort Aransas. From there, it evolved to more or less of a private tour agency; that to me was a real service for students. That really fit in with what my concept of what the student government really was--you know, I didn't see us that much as making earth-shattering decisions that would last forever and would be put into granite; but really providing services for a large group of people who were, for whatever period of time, in one place, at one time, and had common needs.

DSG: That was quite a shift from a couple years before you, wasn't it?

FLEMING: My philosophy, you mean? Yeah, probably so.

DSG: With the concentration on student services rather than on national issues.

FLEMING: Yeah, rather than trying to come up with a united student front on various issues.... I mean, we still continued to get resolutions every week introduced into the Student Senate, but they certainly were not something that I was introducing, or something that I was fishing for. We'd always have somebody coming in for gay rights, or...that was always the most volatile, the most emotional issue. I was not motivated to be that involved in changing the City of Austin government, the State of Texas government, or the United States' foreign policy. That's not saying that students shouldn't be involved and concerned about those things; I think they should be.

DSG: But what should be the role of the student government?

FLEMING: Well, basically, what should be the primary role? I'm not saying that if there's a war going on in Viet Nam, we shouldn't have referendums on it, since people our age are fighting those wars; but by and large, the main concern of student government should be to make a student's life on campus as enjoyable and as hassle-free as possible. That to me was the main function of the student government.

DSG: Did you have any kind of changes in the governmental structure as a whole--constitutional revision movements, or anything like that? I know that started to be really popular under Carol, and proceeding up until the end.

FLEMING: I can honestly say that I don't remember any attempts by my administration or myself to change the structures I inherited, which probably may have been the only year in the ten-year period of time that I remember when there weren't any constitutional amendments...

DSG: Not only ten years, but the entire period that I'm studying--the last 50 years--every two or three years it seems like, "Well, we've got to change up the constitution and make it more modern." You didn't have that kind of feeling.

FLEMING: No, I didn't. I never considered myself a reformist.

DSG: At the end of Sandy's term, the regents took student government off of mandatory funding, and a big, big furor ensued; this was right around the time that you were elected.... There were signs hanging out windows that said "Fund the Regents on an Optional Basis," and things like this. You ended up having the optional checkoff; how did that work out?

FLEMING: Well, again, it was a situation of my philosophy of how to deal with situations like that, and I guess just my personality. But I never really wanted to be in the position where I was confronting and trying to be an adversary with the regents and the administration; I really felt that the students would be best served if we all worked together in a spirit of cooperation. The regents had their reasons, they claimed, for doing this, which was something that was passed in the Legislature about student funds; I don't even remember exactly what their rationale was. But there was some bill passed in the Legislature that was an impetus for that taking place; some legislator had felt like student fees were getting out of hand, and whereas they were keeping the tuition low, various universities were raising fees, and that's how they felt they were getting around raising tuition, so he put some bill in.... The Building Use Fee, that was one of them; the regents were using the Building Use Fee to sell bonds and build buildings, and the legislator felt like that was just another form of tuition, so he wanted to make it on a per-semester-hour basis. Before, the regents had it where, even if you took one course, you paid the \$40.00 Building Use Fee, the same as if you were taking 15 hours. At the same time that that took place, Stephen Spurr was still President, although he was fired during my term. He made it very quickly clear to us that "this has to be done, because the regents' interpretation of the laws as the Legislature passed them is that this is what they feel like needs to be done. It's going to take a couple years to work things out and see how it works on an optional basis, but don't worry, I'll guarantee you for this year or two years," or whatever it was, "that we'll keep your funds on an equal level as they were the year before, so you can go ahead and budget your needs. If enough students don't check off 'Student Government,' I'll make it up with my discretionary funds."

So whereas some may have felt like we should have demanded to have total control over how we were going to tax ourselves, or whatever, to me it was sort of quickly a non-issue.

DSG: You ended up getting a lot of money from the optional checkoff, didn't you? About \$19,000?

FLEMING: Yes, I believe that's right. I hadn't even remembered that, but I even think we came out ahead, because they let us set the optional checkoff at whatever level, within reason, we wanted; I guess it was \$2.00 a person, or something.... I believe we came out ahead on the optional funding. Of course, the ZZ Top concert we had during my administration insured that we weren't going to come up short.

DSG: Was that intended as a fund-raising project, or as a service for the students?

FLEMING: Fund-raising; we did not expect to make nearly as much money as we did, but yes, the motivation was the same as the Student Government Films project, where it would bring good-quality films, at a dollar per student. That's providing a service, but the only reason we're doing it is good ol' capitalistic profit.... That was a little bit of a hassle to put on that concert; the only reason we were doing was because we were guaranteed to make some money. Again, it provided a service, but really not so much for our student body: at the time it was held, and when you consider the number of people who were there, it obviously was much more than just a student concert.

DSG: I'm curious about the role of parties; I've noticed that they spring up sometime in the '50s, and they're kind of active for a while, then die out, then are active again. There was something around at your time called the URC--University Reform Coalition--and it was also mentioned in an article that I read that that was really the machine that propelled Sandy into office.... What was the role of parties; what was the URC about?

FLEMING: Well, I think you have to go back and trace it historically, and see what was going on with the student body at the time. There had been a coalition of Greeks and others; I don't really know who the others were, but by and large I would guess it was at least one third of the Greek community...the Rep Party, that's what it was; the Representative party. And they pretty well controlled elections in the early, mid-, and late '60s. And then you had a sort of philosophical change in the student body in the late '60s; it was going on in American society in general: people were questioning their values in all sorts of organizations. It became chic to be anti-this or anti-that, just because it had been around.... All of a sudden, [elections] came to be more of an individualistic thing; the president didn't run on a slate with the vice-president; people were elected individually; and that went along, and I guess nobody really rocked the boat too much until Sandy Kress came along in '73, and all of the sudden had a novel idea. There were no students around who remembered the old Rep Party, and suddenly, hey! it makes it easy at the poll to know who to vote for for all these races where maybe I'm only aware of Sandy Kress' campaign, and I don't know who to vote for in these other races anyway; he's in the URC, so I'll just vote for his slate.

DSG: The Rep Party was or was not around?

FLEMING: No; it was not.

DSG: So there was nothing but the URC.

FLEMING: There was only one party. I don't think there's ever in the history of UT student government a question of competing parties; it's always been one party versus the independents.

DSG: The URC was more or less of a Greek party?

FLEMING: No...no; Sandy was not a Greek; he did have some student senators who were affiliated with fraternities and sororities who ran with him; but by and large it was just a banner to run under, more so than organizing various organizations to get behind a candidate. It's sort of all standing for one ideal, and "If we're elected, we'll put in the committee structure...and we'll work for these things." They had a platform....

DSG: Was it more an election-oriented device--in other words, did the party affiliations kind of die out once the election was over?

FLEMING: Yes, they did. I don't remember reading at all about legislation introduced in the Student Senate that was URC legislation versus that type of legislation. Once the elections were over, they tried to meld in there together and work together in the Student Senate to do what they thought was best. Sandy certainly appointed people who had been loyal to him as chairmen of the committees, but there did not continue to be an ongoing [rivalry]. And a lot of them questioned, I think, whether there would be a second year of the URC; nobody really even knew. And it sort of backfired on the people when they did try to run the next year, because when it first happened it was new and novel, and people decided to give it a try; and then the next year the people that weren't with the URC prepared for it in all the literature and talk, saying, "We don't need parties on this campus; we don't need a railroad to run our student government." They were prepared in advance to campaign against the URC. I think that most candidates that year would have been better off not trying to recreate something that would work that particular year.

DSG: You were not in the URC.

FLEMING: That's correct; and my runoff opponent was.

DSG: Was there a liberal-conservative split? Sandy intimated that there was one, perhaps; he said, "I was pretty liberal, and Frank was real conservative, over at the other end...."

FLEMING: Yeah, I would say so. I think my election was indicative of the changing mood of the student body at that time; it had just begun to swing back enough to elect me. And I've heard...that it's more conservative, more business-oriented [today]...they're more interested in jobs when they get out of school as opposed to changing the world while they're in school, which really was much more the focus when I first started on the campus in 1970.

DSG: You mentioned before that some of the people in the Senate were resume-padders and some were workaholics. Look at them, and the students who were elected or appointed to committees and so on; overall, which side would you say they were on--were they mostly resume-padders, or

mostly people sincerely interested in helping the machinery move along?

FLEMING: No; I would say 75% were more interested in getting involved and doing some work as opposed to how it would benefit them later.

.....

DSG: You had to work with a variety of groups; what kind of working relationship did you have with the Board of Regents?

FLEMING: Well, you know, it's going to come up sooner or later, so this is as good a time as any--I had an unusual working relationship with Frank Erwin. It dated back previous to when I was elected; I first met Frank as a result of having a former fraternity brother in the State Legislature. Frank enjoyed sipping cocktails with legislators and other influential people over at the Forty Acres Club in the late hours of the evening; and he took me over there a few times...this was when I had no interest particularly in student government; to me, he was an interesting character that you read about occasionally in the Daily Texan, and I had no idea our paths would cross as they would in the future.

The next time we really crossed paths was about two years later, when I was chairman of an organization created out of the Union Board of Directors, in which we were trying to decide what to do with the Student Union building.... That organization created a three-step approach, and decided what we needed to do was to approach the Board of Regents on the basis of remodeling the Student Union building, gutting and changing the food-service portion of the building, and allowing of serving alcoholic beverages in the building. And I had the good fortune at the time to be the liaison to go to the Board of Regents... and ask them if we'd be in a position to get help from them on these matters. So Frank Erwin was chairman of the Building and Grounds Committee; in the fall of that year I began meeting and talking with him... And really, I guess, partly my own ego in wanting to consider being president of the student body, but very much also my interest and concern with the Student Union building--I'd been on the Union Board of Directors for about a year and a half at this time--with those two things, I decided over the Christmas holidays of that year, to run for president of the student body....

So in February of that year, I made a formal presentation to the Board of Regents for making those changes in the Student Union; and really, it was pretty much just ramrodded through by Erwin, because I had convinced him that it was the right thing that needed to be done at the time, and he got the necessary votes and they passed it eight to one. We only had one regent oppose it, because he didn't believe in allowing alcoholic beverages in the Union...

DSG: That was Jenkins Garrett...

FLEMING: Jenkins Garrett; good old Jenks. From there on, after my election, I don't know that I had really all that continuing a relationship; I don't remember a whole lot of issues that we had before the Board of Regents, except the firing of Stephen Spurr. A lot of students were up in arms, and a lot of students were angered at the way it was handled, especially Bill Parrish, the vice-president; he

took a very active role, and was quoted on the CBS Evening News. Again, it was to me sort of an issue that I felt like it was the Board of Regents' to make; I don't think they handled it properly... but I was pretty practicalistic about it. Nobody thought Stephen Spurr had been a great President; he was liked by a lot of people, but no one thought he was making a lasting contribution to the University of Texas. The real reason for rallying around him was the way in which he was fired; not because we were defending him. And I didn't waste my time, really, with that issue.

DSG: And aside from that, you really didn't have much dealings with the Board of Regents?

FLEMING: No, not really; not a whole lot. As a result of getting to know Frank Erwin, and he being such an active member of the Board of Regents, and living in Austin--pretty much everything you read about and hear about his day-to-day running of the University of Texas is, from my perspective, is pretty well true--there wasn't much that went on that he didn't know about, and there weren't too many decisions that they didn't ask him first what he thought. It worked very much, I felt, to my advantage, although it was something I had to keep covered up to an extent: he was not a popular man; it didn't look well for me to spend time with him.... But he did things that but based on that relationship would never have been done otherwise. It was only because of Frank Erwin that we had the ZZ Top concert. And Spurr made reference to that when he was fired--as the ship was going down, he threw arrows at everybody; he made one comment that decisions were made by the president of the student body and members of the Board of Regents, that he didn't even know about. That happened in the ZZ Top concert: we went to Erwin and said, "Look, it's going to be difficult to get permission from anybody to put this concert on so we can make some money for student government....," and he started pulling the strings--he just started calling people and saying, "We're going to have this concert; how do you want it to be done?" He did that to Darrell Royal; otherwise, Royal would never have let us have it on his football field. I don't know that he ever talked to Spurr; he just talked to the Vice-President for Student Affairs and said, "The students have got a good idea; let's let them do it."

DSG: So he wasn't against you having the funding, then.

FLEMING: No, no...

DSG: It comes out in what material that there is, that the regents were out to GET student government. They wanted to cut their funds, and cut student government off at the roots.

FLEMING: Well, you know, I can't say that my philosophy and approach towards student government didn't help us win a more positive attitude by Erwin and the members of the Board of Regents. We weren't voting funds to bring gay speakers to campus, and we weren't voting funds for abortion clinics; we weren't doing things that were as controversial.



And a lot of people may attack me, and say "You weren't standing up to the Board of Regents and fighting for the students' rights," but I disagree with that; I think that we were more reflective of the current student body, if you take them as a whole, at that time. And we were a different student body from the student body in '68 to '72.

.....  
DSG: What about your relationship with the administration? You spoke of Spurr briefly; did you find that most of the time when you wanted something, you were having to go over his head to Erwin?

FLEMING: No; I don't remember too many things, besides the rock concert really, that we ever went over anybody's head on. Spurr had just got fired in September, or something like that...most of relations... up to that point would have been with Ron Brown, Vice-President for Student Affairs, and Jim Duncan, the Dean of Students; I think they considered me a breath of fresh air and a welcome change...

DSG: From Sandy?

FLEMING: From Sandy; from their past three or four years--Jeff Jones forward, I guess. And because we had had a working relationship in the past, when I was on the Union Board of Directors..., I knew them; I didn't come out of the law school or the graduate school, never been heard of before, sort of like Bob Binder, or Dick Benson--nobody knew him until he ran Bob's campaign and spent a year as his administrative assistant. But I had an ongoing working relationship with these people, and I didn't have any problem with access; I didn't have any problem getting them to return my phone calls, or letting me drop into their office if I had a problem.

DSG: Were they helpful?

FLEMING: Yes. I felt like they were.

DSG: What about with the faculty and staff, on the committees and so forth that students served on?

FLEMING: The only thing I really remember about that...Dr. Bill Livingston, who was president of the Faculty Senate and presided also over the University Council meetings; and the fortunate thing I had going for me there was, I'd had one or two classes under him before that, and he knew me as a student. He was, I guess, one of my favorite professors the whole time I was there and, whereas I wasn't one of his best students, he did like me, and therefore I had a good relationship with him. I don't really remember that we changed too much, or had any long-term effect on the students; it seemed like we had some issues that we were backing...and worked toward, but I don't even remember what they were at this point. But I felt like we always got a fair shake.

DSG: You ended up successfully adding three students to the University Council...

FLEMING: Did we? I didn't even remember that.

DSG: ...to bring the total student representation on that to nine. Did the students really have an effective voice there? I mean, you've got nine students and 100 faculty members, or something like that; did it make that much difference?

FLEMING: No; I don't know. Sure, it always helps to make an increase in the proportional representation on something like that, but--it's always hard for students who are at the University at the time to understand this--ongoing policy decisions regarding academics are really better made by the faculty that's there year-in and year-out and isn't as susceptible to philosophical changes in the student body as the student body is. That may or may not be a popular opinion with students, but I think that's pretty well true, and I think I pretty well realized that even while I was there. I think that as long as the University Council is open to hearing student input and consulting them in decisions...that that's all that students should ask for or expect. When it really comes down to it, academic questions and standards are going to have to be decided upon by the faculty.

DSG: Did you have any power in non-student appointments to University committees, posts of deans, or the presidency? Of course, the Lorene Rogers controversy was the following year....

FLEMING: I didn't have any power over who they appointed to that search committee; I, as president of the student body, appointed two students to it, but they [the faculty members] were appointed, I guess, by Lorene Rogers; I don't know that they even had our advice and consent.

DSG: What about to other University posts?

FLEMING: I don't believe we did. I believe the only power we had would have been in the form of a consultation, and I don't remember any posts that were having to be filled that year; there may have been some, where they asked me for names. But it always a final decision by the President.

DSG: What about control of the student services fee? Of course, that had been removed at some time previously; but did you have any say in it--any kind of input on how it was divvied up?

FLEMING: Well, there wasn't one after the optional funding.

DSG: Wasn't there a fee for athletics and stuff like that; or had that already been divided up into the athletics fee, CEC fee...?

FLEMING: No, it had already been divided up by the fall of the next year [1974]. Everything was optional--CEC, Intercollegiate Athletics, Student Government; the only thing that was mandatory was the shuttle bus and the health center....

DSG: Do you recall any of the main campus issues that student government addressed?

FLEMING: The main on-campus issues, I guess, were the firing of Spurr--how it should have been handled, and how we should go about finding a replacement...

DSG: What exactly was the question, as far as the firing of Spurr? I read the letters between Erwin and Spurr in the Cactus...

FLEMING: I think generally, the faculty was more upset than anybody else, and they tried to rally students behind their cause; I think they felt like there should not be a sudden, abrupt, capricious firing of a president unless there is dissention among the faculty ranks.

DSG: What was the reason that he was fired?

FLEMING: It really came down to personalities between him and about three regents. The main thing they got upset about was the handling of the Harry Ransom Center.... There were some power struggles about whose control the HRC was going to be under, and how they were going to go about making some decisions; and Spurr just wasn't doing things the way Jenkins Garrett wanted them done.... And I think generally, the rift that was caused in that situation enabled a not particularly popular president, with no one particularly defending him, to allow two or three upset regents to get the other six to go along with it; or else those two or three told [Chancellor Charles] LeMaistre that "when you're ready to fire him, we'll support you," or else they just told him flat out, "you fire him, or we'll go hire another chancellor who will." From all I've gathered, that pretty much is what I'd assume. And I think the faculty just got upset that it wasn't a groundswell from the faculty that caused this man to be fired; it was the regents, from above, coming down and meddling in our affairs.

DSG: OK, so the firing of Spurr was a campus issue...

FLEMING: Yeah; that aside, the Student Union was an issue that I worked on my whole year.... We ended up having to relocate the Union for a year [during remodeling].... Let's see, other campus issues... the basketball team was doing pretty bad, before we hired Abe Lemons [laughing].... I think, generally, the continuing emphasis on minority recruitment of students; rewarding excellence in teaching on the faculty--not just the "publish or perish" theory--students wanted to make sure we continued to have an emphasis on quality of teaching.... I'm sure I'm leaving out some, but nothing else comes particularly to mind.

DSG: What about off-campus activities? You had a state lobby committee and a city lobby committee; how active were they--what was their role?

FLEMING: Watchdog. I guess that's the best way to term their role.

That, and a limited ability to change anything soon; but at least, make people informed before a decision was made, so that maybe some lobbying could be done by the students as a whole, if they can get really motivated and interested on an issue. I don't really remember any specific things...in the last seven years, that 12-month period of time has blurred.

DSG: Mainly, though, its role was watchdog, rather than trying to directly influence what was going on?

FLEMING: I think so; I mean, that was the net effect, although some people may have been there for the sole purpose of trying to make changes. The change that occurred during my tenure was that students could vote in the town where they went to school as opposed to their previous hometown, and the fact that the students had really turned out to vote--that they could make a change; they did elect some [City] Council members.

DSG: The Cactus called '74-'75 a carry-over year; it said "Many programs were carried over from previous years' projects, which is perhaps why so many were successful--they had a year to incubate." Do you think that was a major factor--continuity rather than trying to do everything new?

FLEMING: Yeah; I mean, I guess since I ran against a URC candidate, I could have come in there with some sort of mandate--you know, "What URC had done is wrong, and here's what I'm going to do different," but I just didn't have any sort of ego needs to make my own empire, and I'm sure those committees, having functioned for a year, there was a lot of holdover members that served on a committee for two years, instead of all brand-new people, and a lot of people who had served the first year, I appointed as chairmen. I can honestly say that I appointed a lot of people chairmen of committees who had not been involved in my campaign, some of which I certainly later regretted having appointed.... I'm sure that certainly did help out.

DSG: What was your version of the controversy over your election?

FLEMING: Basically, rumor had gone around about my relationship with Erwin as a result of working with him on that Student Union building thing. The fact that, if Erwin were going to have a favorite in this race, he would obviously favor the fraternity-conservative type of person as opposed to the liberal female law student [Lee Rohn] who was following in Sandy Kress' footsteps. There was a lot of paranoia that I was just a token candidate of Frank Erwin's, and all of the horror that that would imply--that the actual regents were infiltrating even our campus elections. So there were no overt references to that; I'll always be grateful to Lee Rohn that she didn't personally go out and campaign, saying anything to those effects. But once it hit her that she lost the election, she tried to put two and two together, and people started putting ideas in her head on how things could have been not kosher; there were some things that I left myself open to, to be

questioned. Quite frankly, in my mind, what really happened--they charged about five or six things, and some of them were pretty petty, such as your signs were up in the wrong place without authority, and little things like that...--but the two main things that Lee really felt like she might have had a chance to catch me on were one, a reference that then-editor of the Cactus Liz Daily had been told by her good friend, the resident dorm-mother, or whatever the term is, that she'd lived with her freshman and sophomore year...that "I think you should help support Frank, because you might have a better chance of getting into the LBJ School of Public Affairs, because he's perceived of as being get-along, and the administration would rather have him as president of the student body than Lee Rohn...." She told her; she just made that comment to her.

Well, it really upset Liz, and I'm not surprised that it did. It was not a comment that I solicited; I had met [the dorm mother], I had wanted to campaign in the girls' dorms and I wanted to find out what night they had dinner...and she liked me, you know?

DSG: In all modesty.

FLEMING: In all modesty, she felt threatened by Lee Rohn, and she liked me. And you know, I'm not opposed to using those things to my advantage; I didn't feel like I was doing anything illegal or immoral to do that. I think it is wrong for her to have made that value judgement, and possibly told her girls in her dorm to vote for me; that's probably wrong, but it's not something I asked her to do; it's not something that anybody could find fault with me for.

DSG: Lee was charging that you had had her say that.

FLEMING: Yeah; so she came up with that. And the second issue was the one that I think really brought her to try to trace back and do something about the Liz Daily issue: I did not have a 2.25 grade point average on the computer when I wanted to run for president of the student body. The reasons for that were two grades that I had incompletes in, and if you don't complete an incomplete in one semester, the computer says "F," although by the University rules and regulations, you can complete that incomplete anytime up until the time you graduate, and have the F changed on the computer to whatever. So I went to both professors that I had those incompletes in, and it was the same situation in both: there was one paper that I could complete; if I turned a paper at all...I'd make a C in the course, or I'd make a D if I didn't do anything. Well, the old procrastinator finally told the professor, "I need this grade changed today; go ahead and record whatever grade you have for me." I went to another professor, and it was the same situation--there'd been a take-home final that was optional; you either had the grade you had in the course, or you had to complete this take-home final. I had a high B in the course up until that time, and if I'd made an A on that take-home final, I could've made an A in the course; and I let it drag on until all of a sudden I was running for president...and I needed to get these grades cleared up in order to get the computer to verify me.

So I went to that professor, and I said, "I just don't have time to complete that take-home final"; it was from the previous spring. "I wish you'd just go ahead and record that B, and let's end this thing." So he did that. Well, rumor gets around and gets going, and one guy who's working in the registrar's office was sympathetic to Lee Rohn, and said, "I think something fishy's going on here." He alleged he even saw a letter, telling this professor that he wouldn't get tenure unless he changed my grade from an F to a B! The poor professor was raked over the coals; we had an exhaustive hearing in his office, and he reiterated exactly what it was. I really felt sorry for him, because I'd put him in the middle of the situation, and he didn't deserve to have his integrity questioned. I really think it was because of the facts in black and white on that grade change that Lee began to trace--"Well, gee, maybe Erwin was involved in that, and maybe he was involved in this Liz Daily thing, and maybe he's behind Fleming's whole campaign, and he would never have run for president if Erwin hadn't told him to..."--it just snowballed.

.....  
DSG: The Students' Association is supposed to function as the official "voice" of the student body, as much as any one group can. How well did it function in that role, as you saw it?

FLEMING: I think it functioned well as a voice.

DSG: Representative?

FLEMING: A representative voice of the students. I don't think it did, and I don't think it ever will act as a powerful threat to the powers-that-be.... I don't think they'll probably ever have a great deal of financial power, and I think there probably shouldn't be, because of the fact that students have demonstrated over the years that they can be a bit fickle--vote student government in, vote it out, vote for imaginary candidates--that's not a particularly bad reflection of people between the ages of 18 and 22; you're supposed to have a little fun in those years. That doesn't bother me.

DSG: OK. Take that same question from the point of view of the rank-and-file student; the person who's not real involved in anything, particularly, but is kind of plodding along in his major...how did he view the Students' Association? Did he see it as "his" Association--did he feel like it was his "voice" on campus or off?

FLEMING: No. I think he generally took it for granted, in the same sense that most Americans take most things for granted; maybe even a little more so, because of the fact that student government does not have even as much power--it IS only a voice. But I don't take too much fault with that. Most Dallasites just expect roads to appear where they want to go; they don't want to get involved and go down to public hearings and talk about whether it should be a four-lane road or a six-lane road; somebody else will take care of that. And I think pretty generally, we offered good programs and services to the students, by fact of the participation and the success of things such as the

Student Health Program. I personally think that's one of the most important and best things that we did our year in student government, that we took a long, serious look at the student health policy, and made some real changes in it. That, to me, is a real service.

DSG: The insurance program...?

FLEMING: Health insurance. You know, student government was the voice that enabled the beginning of the shuttle bus system; it is now on its own and functioning separate and apart from student government, and that's the way it should be; that's fine. The Student Health Center: we were involved...back in the early days, in helping to get it going. You know, you take those two services right there: those are used by nearly all the students, every semester. The student film program; student tours--most people take those things for granted; they don't know where they came from or why they're there, but if they're good services, they avail themselves of them.... I really feel like student government should be in a position to know the needs of the students, because it is a group of students; and to be imaginative, and come up with things that help make the life of the student more enjoyable, and more hassle-free.

DSG: You were quoted in the Cactus: "When asked about his term of office, Fleming said, 'I never got to the point where I felt really comfortable with the job I did.'" Do you still feel that way? How would you evaluate your own efficacy as president?

FLEMING: I look back on that time as sort of being the best of times and the worst of times. Some people are rather hard-shelled and immune to a lot of things; I personally am not. I have sort of a soft core in the center, although I can protect myself when I need to. But the particular adverse circumstances that I took office in, where there was not just an election challenge, but a long, exhaustive dispute, and allegations that I'd lied, that I'd coerced people into doing things that were illegal--those things really hurt me for years after I was president. I know it affected me all the time I was president; I guess I was always looking over my shoulder...wondering whether or not I had the trust and confidence of the people I was trying to lead. I think that's probably what I was reflecting on when I made that comment.

As far as looking back on it now, I feel like we did a good job; I felt like things rolled fairly smooth; needs were met and addressed. My one real sense of pride and accomplishment is the Student Union, because I get a lot of comments now from people who were in school at the same time I was who have gone back to the campus--"Gosh, that Union is incredible," you know.... Hearing a few comments like that, I really feel like my time was well spent. I may have neglected other areas that some people think I should have been more active in, but for the long-term effect, I feel like the time I spent, where I only had so much time, was well spent.

DSG: If you had to look back and pick out one or two outstanding

contributions of the Fleming Administration, what would they be? What lasting mark did you leave? It may be something that you've already said.

FLEMING: I think it is; I'm trying to think of anything I'd want to add to that. May it not put my mother in her grave, but--bringing alcoholic beverages to the Student Union, and remodeling it to make it an up-to-date facility and one that met the needs of a new and different student body than the one it was built to serve, would be that [outstanding accomplishment]. And I certainly don't take all the credit for that; I'm simply saying that I spent a lot of time the year that I was president working on that project, along with Shirley Perry, and Janie Strauss; mainly the three of us, but about 25 other people.

DSG: Judy Spalding told me about a paper that she wrote, although I have not yet seen it, on the last five years of student government, which would be 1973-1978, and she said that in the time she studied, in her opinion, she never found one year where the government was really effective. Now, she didn't tell me what criteria she judged that on, but she said she feels like it was the lack of effectiveness, as perceived by the student body, that led to the abolition.... What do you think led to the abolition, four years after you were president?

FLEMING: My favorite comment to that is that I feel like, in my one year in office, I solved all the problems that students had, and it took them a couple of years to realize that they didn't have any more problems, and therefore didn't need a student government [laughing]. Seriously, I think, just as I reflected on earlier, that students, people the age of 18 to 22 or 25..., you know, are very susceptible to pranks, being fickle, having fun, to not quite yet being fully mature adults--although they have the capability of being, they sometimes choose not to be, and when I look back at some of the things I did at that time in my life, I sure am glad I didn't get caught doing a lot of them, but I had fun doing it. I don't think you need to paint any real significance to the reasons why student government was voted down; I think somebody just sort of dared the students to do it, and they said, "Well, SURE, we can vote student government out--you just watch us!" I don't think there should be any other significance placed to it than that. I don't think there was any anger that student government wasn't meeting our needs...

DSG: Not any kind of disillusionment with not being represented?

FLEMING: No; no. I don't think there was that at all. Unfortunately, in our election, it was the largest turnout in four or five years; it was the largest election since Jeff Jones had gotten elected--we had a little over 8,000 turn out to vote. That's still only one-fifth of the student body...

DSG: 7,186...



FLEMING: It doesn't matter; that still is one-fifth of the campus student body, so it doesn't take much to find one issue to bring out a whole new set of voters who just kind of come out to vote, sort of like Proposition 13 in California--two or three years later, California's not able to pay its debts, and having to send people IOU's, and people may change their minds about whether it was such a good idea....

I don't think any more significance should be placed to it than that.

DSG: Even when you look at it three years later, and the students still don't want to bring it back?

FLEMING: No, because I think the vital organs have been preserved. There are still student services being provided; whether or not it's being done by the Dean of Students' office and people he hires and coordinates to do it, or whatever. The Student Union may now be showing three films a weekend, as opposed to one or two when student government had their films being shown. Somebody's picking up the slack; the students did not suffer enough without student government. If student government had had all the power over all the services, and when they voted out student government, the Student Union building closed down and locked its doors, the student Co-Op closed down and locked its doors, the shuttle bus system quit running, and the Health Center ended, you'd have seen those students run back to the polls in about two weeks and DEMAND that student government be put back on this campus.

The fact of the matter is, most of the things that student government can take the credit for doing--they've satellited them off, made them their own entities. And most of the day-to-day routine things that student government does, or should be doing, there's no reason for your average student to be aware of. It doesn't take anything away from the student government that the average student doesn't know about it.... I just thought of that analysis, and I think that's the best thing I can say about student government: if all those services had shut down, you tell me--would it have been two weeks? Would it have taken that long?

DSG: It probably wouldn't have happened in the first place.

FLEMING: Sure.

DSG: Let me ask you, as I warned you I would, to look ahead at the prospects for the new Students' Association. They've been around now for five months; we have a new Senate; a new president. What do you see for us ahead? Is it even a viable exercise on a campus with a population approaching 50,000 people?

FLEMING: Oh, sure; I think it's even a more important exercise due to the fact that you do have 50,000. There needs to be student input into decision-making--into the student-faculty committees, into the University Council, even though I don't believe students should be given the final decision-making authority, I think student input needs

to be in these things. All 50,000 students can't go into the University Council meeting and sit around and discuss these things; there has got to be a way of representation somehow, and I think it is far better to have elected officials than to have the dean of students make appointments. I think if student government will sell itself on what it is, and not try to tell students that we're going to be something we're not--"If you'll allow us to exist, we're going to make all sorts of changes overnight, and have all sorts of power; you just wait and see." If they'll just tell it like it is, and be responsible, and try to meet the needs of the student body, be representative of the minorities and reflect the attitudes of the majority..., then I think student government has an excellent chance.

.....

DSG: If our new president-elect were to come sit down here where I am, and say, "Frank, you know, I'm going to be the first full-term president in the new Association, and people are still saying that the jury's still out on student government, they're being skeptical; I feel like I really need to get it on its feet as quick as possible. What suggestion would you give me to make it succeed?".....

FLEMING: A speaker's bureau, to go out and tell the message of the Students' Association to any student group that will listen.

DSG: The message being...?

FLEMING: Just sit down and tell about what we're planning to do; and what we do; and educate them, moreso than the paragraph that they get in some piece of literature at registration or something. To actually have some physical contact; communication with the constituency. And even if you talk to every student organization on campus--what percentage of that campus is a member of those organizations? It's still far below 50%. But that would be my advice: just try to go out and have a platform, decide what you want to accomplish, what things to do, and make it reasonable--make it things you know you can do, or have a good hope of doing. If you want to have a student lobby committee, sell it on the basis of we're going to be a watchdog and help the Daily Texan, basically, to be a watchdog on the city, and to formulate some ideas and give our input and influence to the City Council members; but don't sell it as, "If we had a student lobby committee, all of a sudden everything we want as students is going to happen." You're just going to be back to where you were, with people getting disillusioned, from that standpoint, and unhappy.

That's really all I think you can do. You can't do it just by writing articles in the Daily Texan. You've got to give people the opportunity to have one-on-one feedback with you, and say "I am the Students' Association. I am your elected official...what do you want to see done? This is what we had in mind...." .... You can go out and sell yourself, and convince them that you're doing legitimate things that need to be done, and will be done, whether there's an elected representative or appointed representatives; but "We think it's better to have them elected. How do you feel?"

## CAROL CRABTREE DONOVAN

January 3, 1983

*Shortly after interviewing Sandy Kress, I met with the former Carol Crabtree, now married and an attorney with the law firm of Cowles, Sorrels, Patterson and Thompson. Crabtree, who was Students' Association President 1975-1976, was the first woman ever to hold this post. She had the difficult task of representing the student government during the intense campus conflict over the controversial appointment of Dr. Lorene Rogers to the University Presidency during the fall semester, and perhaps the even greater challenge of coping with the widespread disillusionment among students that followed. What little has been written about the tenure of Carol Crabtree Donovan I found to a great extent to be either slanted, unfair, or grossly inaccurate. This was her account of that term.*

DSG: What was the structure of the Students' Association during your term, both as a whole, and in particular, the executive branch?

DONOVAN: There was the Student Senate, and the President presided over the Student Senate; it was composed of four to five Senators that were elected at large, over the entire campus. In addition, it was composed of at least one person per college, representing their own particular college; a college might have had more than one, depending on the population of their particular college--I think it was one for every thousand students.

DSG: Now, you didn't have a House of Delegates at that point, did you? It had already been abolished?

DONOVAN: No, we didn't...it had already been abolished, and the Student Senate was the only representative body, and the presiding officers of the student government were the President and the Vice-President....

DSG: What about the executive branch? How did you organize that?

DONOVAN: Well, the way I personally organized it was that I asked the Vice-President to handle all external affairs, which was primarily lobbying efforts at the city council, the state legislature, and also on the national level. There was nothing in the Constitution or in any guidelines for student government to assign that role to him, but I was primarily interested in the internal affairs on the campus: student services, equal opportunity and the University role in recruitment; I was particularly interested in increasing the funding in support of the women's athletic program--all internal kinds of activities. And so because of my interest in that area, I let him handle external affairs, and I handled the internal affairs.

DSG: Were you set up on a committee system?

DONOVAN: Yes.

DSG: What types of things did the committees handle?

DONOVAN: We had probably about ten different standing committees: we had a city lobby committee, and a state lobby committee.... All of the committees had their own chairmen which were selected by me, as the president, with the recommendations of the persons that I asked to help [me] interview. The committees that dealt mostly with external affairs were supervised by the Vice-President, and the committees that dealt with internal affairs were supervised by me; the chairmen reported directly to me and the Vice-President. Other committees that we had included women's affairs committee, minority affairs committee, student services committee that dealt with activities such as increasing bicycle routes on campus for persons who did not have cars and needed access, the shuttle bus system, which was originated by student government but by that time was its own functioning body.

DSG: Were there any major changes in the governing structure as far as constitutional amendments or significant changes that you made when you came into office?

DONOVAN: No, not really; not when I came into office. I had been involved in student government ever since my freshman year, so the committee structure as it was when I came in was the committee structure that I had dealt with--I thought it was a good system, so I pretty much left it as it was. Sandy Kress had done a lot with the committee structure when he had come in; he had a lot of ideas from a former tenancy in student government at Berkeley. And I thought the system was good, and I had been a student Senator under Sandy....

DSG: Then that was pretty much the same system continuing through Frank Fleming's term and on into yours?

DONOVAN: Right. Now the only structural activity I did was to appoint a committee that caused itself SARC--Students' Association Reorganization Committee--and what they did was interview many, many former student body presidents and other persons who had been involved in student government in the past...it studied structure and in fact made recommendations, but they were appointed in the spring, and went on through the summer after I had left the student body presidency, and then reported the next year under Jay Adkins' administration; but their plans were not adopted and the structure remained pretty much the same.

DSG: What kind of suggestions did they have?

DONOVAN: Well, as I say, I was not in student government at that time, but I think that they wanted to streamline the committee system; I think they wanted to do away with some of the committees that they had, and I believe that there were some suggestions incorporating the college councils within the student government, rather than keeping them as the separate bodies that they were at the time I was president.

DSG: I guess one of the big questions of the last decade has been concern with funding, both control of the student services fee with the Students' Association having a say in how it's allocated, and funding for the machinery of student government itself. I believe, correct me if I'm wrong, that it was in '74 that the regents went to the optional basis for funding the student government....

DONOVAN: I believe that's correct, because we were on optional funding when I took office in '75, and I believe it was at the conclusion of Sandy's administration that the funding was taken off--or maybe the beginning of Frank Fleming's; I'm fuzzy there. But I do know that we were on optional funding the entire time that I was student body president, and that I personally appeared before the regents at the conclusion of my term, but after Jay Adkins had been elected, and I requested that they return student government to mandatory funding, and gave my arguments before the Board of Regents. I was questioned by the Board of Regents as to how student government had spent its money under my administration, and though they did not give this as a reason, I was extensively questioned about the use of student government funds for the protesting of Dr. Rogers' appointment as President. So one might conclude that that had something to do with them not wanting to put student government back on mandatory funding; and then other people have hypothesized that perhaps it had something to do with Mr. Adkins' election as president.

DSG: That they felt that student government was going to be a farce and therefore they shouldn't continue to fund it, or rather to resume funding it?

DONOVAN: Right, that's what's been hypothesized.

DSG: What effect would you say that the lack of mandatory funding had on student government during your term?

DONOVAN: Well, not so much during my term, but I think the act of taking away mandatory funding was an effort to weaken student government. The reason that it did not have that much effect on my administration, or for that matter, on Frank Fleming's administration, was because there had been a rock concert at the beginning of Frank Fleming's administration, during that summer [1974]--it was while he was president, but before the big school year began--it was "ZZ Top," and it raised so much money, \$20,000, that student government was just in great shape financially during all of Frank's administration and also during mine. I don't know what kind of financial shape it remained in during Jay Adkins' administration, but I don't believe they were in as good a financial situation as we had been because the money, of course, was getting lower and lower.

DSG: What about the ability to allocate the student services fee?

DONOVAN: Now that went out long before I took office....

DSG: Did that handicap your administration?

DONOVAN: Well, I feel like it handicapped student government as a whole. The reason I shy away from saying it handicapped my administration was because as long as I had been involved in student government, we had never had that power, so it was not something that we felt had been taken away from us. It wasn't even until my second year in student government that I even found out that we had once had that power.... I think it handicapped student government as a whole because, let's face it, having the power of the purse-strings has a lot to do with what kind of power you have in any institution, and when that power was taken away from student government it reduced significantly the power that student government had.

DSG: How would you evaluate the degree of student participation in the government, from your standpoint? Were students, would you say, interested primarily in student government per se, or were they more after other things--political action, or something like that?

DONOVAN: I think people who participated ran on two drives; some of them had both drives, and some of them had both drives. One drive was obviously the desire to be recognized, to have some kind of stature at their college institution--the desire to be known as a Student Senator, or student body Vice-President, which is an ego thing that you probably find a little bit in all of us, some more than others. Also, there were those who were driven strictly on student service--wanting to do something, or make some change: believing in something so much that they were willing to take action and utilize their extracurricular time to do something about it. And I'd say it was probably the majority of the people who had a combination of both of those drives.

DSG: Would you say that the Students' Association was representative of the student body, from your standpoint?

DONOVAN: I think all in all, the students that were elected were representative, but many times there were situations which I thought where the voting was slightly to the left of what the majority of the student body believed. The reason I say that is because during my tenure as student body president, the pendulum is beginning to swing back towards conservatism. It wasn't always that way; for example, when I was a student senator with Dick Benson and with Sandy Kress' administration, I'd say the student body as a whole was much more liberal than it was during my tenure as president. We're looking at a campus that elected President Ford during my tenure--that's not the same kind of campus as was electing other, much more liberal persons during Sandy Kress and Dick Benson's administrations.

DSG: And yet you had an almost left of liberal, anarchic campaign for president immediately after yours.

DONOVAN: That's right; and certain times I look at Adkins...I had an opportunity to talk to him...and sometimes I felt that Adkins was not so much as liberal as some people saw him to be, as he was apolitical.

He was almost an anti-student-government person. You would maybe wonder why did he run for student government if he really was anti-student-government, but I think he and Skip Slyfield ran as a demonstration against student government.

DSG: Do you think they expected to win?

DONOVAN: I'd say that at the beginning they probably did not expect to win, but I think they probably were pleasantly surprised at the number of people who also felt frustrated with student government and its lack of power.

DSG: Would you say that when you had a vote on campus that the Students' Association could interpret that as a mandate for action of one type or another, or was there really no connection between how the student constituency felt and how the Senate voted?

DONOVAN: I think that the student Senate could probably take a vote of the student body as much of a mandate as a state legislator can take a vote of the people on some kind of referendum. We all know that many, many people do not vote, so there's always going to be the people who will argue against the vote and say, "Well, look how many people did NOT vote." The bottom line is that you can only go on what the people did vote on. In answer to your question as to whether the Senate took heed of the student referenda, I think basically where there was some kind of referendum like that, students knew good and well that they'd better go with that; of course, there isn't the same kind of pressure as there is on the national and state level because most of the student senators are not going to run for reelection, because we're only dealing with a four year lifespan, and most people don't run their freshman year--they're just looking at their junior and senior years. So there's not so much a fear of not getting elected as it is the fear of being rejected by their peers. But the hitch to all this is that there were very few referendum votes taken, so there were very few mandates of the people.

DSG: The next thing I wanted to look at was student government in the context of the University as a whole--student government's role on campus, and so forth.... How would you describe the Association's relationship with the Board of Regents during your term?

DONOVAN: I think there was a feeling of respect between the two bodies. I wouldn't lash out against the Board of Regents; I didn't call them names; I dealt with them on a professional level and I lobbied with them on a professional level in the same way I would lobby with any corporate board or for that matter some kind of legislative body. So I think that approach to them was respected. I think they also knew how much power I did and didn't have as student body president, and they knew what they did and did not have to do; and basically, they did not have to do much of anything. Really, any step that they took towards giving us our way, so to speak, were public-relations steps.

DSG: More to pacify the student government than anything else?

DONOVAN: Well, I guess I don't want to say pacify, because I feel like many of their efforts were genuine. Tom Law, for example, I think was an excellent regent; and I don't think anything he did towards giving students what they wanted was an effort to pacify them. I think he generally and genuinely wanted to act in a way that would be pleasing to the students, because he felt it was the students' university.

DSG: Do you think, although there were exceptions--Tom Law and a couple others who were mentioned in the [1976] Cactus in the discussion of the 5-3 vote to appoint Dr. Rogers to the presidency....

DONOVAN: Lady Bird [Johnson] and Dr. [James] Bauerle....

DSG: Right. But if you take the regents as a whole, and if you look at all their actions and their relationship with the Crabtree Administration, did you ever get the feeling that the regents were out to sabotage the student government, or that they were undertaking a process of trying to deinstitutionalize it?

DONOVAN: No, I didn't feel that there was that much consideration given to sabotaging student government; I think probably it was--and this is how I felt at the time--that their concerns were not so much with the student constituency, as they were with other constituencies that they felt were more important; that from their standpoint, they believed that they had to take several constituencies into consideration, and what students wanted was only one very minor consideration compared to what other constituencies wanted.

DSG: Was Frank Erwin still on the Board?

DONOVAN: No, I believe he had gone out the December before I took office.

DSG: What about with the administration?

DONOVAN: I think the administration felt more responsible to the students, because they were dealing with the students on a daily basis, whereas the regents came to campus on a once-a-month basis, I believe it was. And I think that the administration generally tried to work with the students, but they, like the regents, had other constituencies, but not as many other constituencies as the regents had to deal with. I don't think there was any effort to sabotage student government.

DSG: O.K., what about with the faculty and staff, as far as working on University committees and boards and such?

DONOVAN: The faculty and staff and students were generally allies, through most any efforts in student government. There were occasions when I think the students were naively surprised that, faced with bettering their own situation versus bettering the student situation, the faculty of course chose to better their own. That was only natural....



Basically, though, I would say that they were allies.

DSG: What about on the University Council? Same situation?

DONOVAN: Not so much on the University Council; I'd say on most any academic issues they'd probably stick with you. My experiences on the University Council and through University committees were that occasionally you would have conflicts with the faculty. A minor example was "dead days." There was a decision before I took office to eliminate dead days, and at that point the faculty and students were together, that they wanted to keep the dead days, but the staff wanted to do away with the dead days. And of course, if you look at the practical aspects, the administration had to work whether the faculty and students had dead days or not; the administration didn't see the value of dead days--they felt like the students should have been studying all through the semester anyway, and that faculty members didn't need the dead day because they weren't teaching classes.... So in that situation, the alliance split up: it was the faculty and students against the staff.

DSG: What kind of power did the Students' Association have and/or exercise in appointing people to student positions on University boards?

DONOVAN: Basically, the student body president was allowed to appoint whoever he or she wished to appoint; but there are very few student spots in comparison to the number of faculty and staff that were on each committee, so the students were very easily outvoted if there was a conflict. And also, even though the student body president had the ability to appoint students to those committees, the way the administration looked at it was the student body president's appointments were merely recommendations, and the president of the University could or could not take these recommendations as he or she saw fit. But I can say they usually did take the recommendations, and allowed the students to be appointed.

DSG: Were there appointments that you made that were overridden by the administration?

DONOVAN: I don't remember any.

DSG: So it was for practical purposes a rubber stamp once you made the appointment.

DONOVAN: Right.

DSG: What about non-student appointments--what influence did you have there, let's say appointments of academic officials, deans, and appointments to other University committees of faculty members?

DONOVAN: Well, the student body president had no powers, except that if a committee was formed as a committee to review applicants for these positions, sometimes they would allow the student body president to suggest students to serve on those committees; but again, these were merely

suggestions--they weren't anybody that they had to appoint automatically just because the student body president recommended them.

DSG: The Students' Association itself, though, didn't really have any lobbying role in picking people for these positions?

DONOVAN: No, not really.... Most of the college dean selections were handled through the colleges, so probably it was the college councils that had most of a part in that. I don't remember having any part in the selection of college deans. Now what was taking place while I was president of the student government was the selection of a University President, and the regents did appoint students to their own general selection committee, but the student body president and the Students' Association did not have a say on the selection of that student. And then there was another committee that was formed called the Student-Faculty Review Committee that interviewed people first and then passed those recommendations on to the regents, and I do believe that the Students' Association had a say in which students could serve on that committee.

DSG: What was the composition of that committee?

DONOVAN: If I remember correctly, and this was appointed before I took office, there were three students and three faculty; I believe there were somewhere between six and eight persons on that committee, and there were about as many students as faculty.

DSG: The students were student government appointees or recommendations?

DONOVAN: Recommendations.

DSG: What was the role of that advisory committee?

DONOVAN: Well, the role as the Students' Association understood it was that the Advisory Committee would interview all the candidates, and it would then make its recommendations to the regents, and that their recommendations would be strongly considered. What happened, however, was that they handed over five recommendations, and not one of those recommendations was selected.

DSG: Was it the Committee's and the Students' Association's understanding that somebody who was not on that list of recommendations would not be selected?

DONOVAN: Well, I guess in all fairness to the regents, I have to say that it was never said that someone not recommended would not be picked, but it definitely was our understanding, naive as it may have been at the time, that if someone was not recommended by this committee, they would not be selected.

DSG: Why was Dr. Rogers' appointment opposed?

DONOVAN: From speaking with members of the Student-Faculty Review Committee, it was my understanding that she was not recommended because the five candidates that were recommended by the Committee were of a higher caliber, and had a higher degree of experience in administration as a president than she had had.

DSG: She was ad interim President at the time.

DONOVAN: Right, she sure was; and she had served as a vice-president, I believe, and also as an administrative assistant...of course, she had held several administrative positions through her college. But I was told by members of the Student-Faculty Review Committee that it wasn't that they thought that she was incompetent--I mean, there was never any question that Dr. Rogers was a competent human being that could do a good job--but she in their opinion was not of as high a caliber as the five that they recommended. Now I personally was not privy to any of the interviews; I never met any of the five applicants; so I personally can't speak to how she compared to those. I'm just going on what I was told by members of the Student-Faculty Review Committee. And I always made it clear that I had no personal animosity towards Dr. Rogers; I thought she was a very competent person and I had enjoyed working with her when she was ad interim president while I was student body president. But what made me angry, and what made the majority of the students that I worked with in student government angry, was that she had been appointed without ever having been recommended by the committee; it was more on the principle of the thing--they really slapped us all in the face, and we basically took it as a statement by the regents that they were not interested in student & faculty input.

DSG: Were there any other reasons why she was opposed? I know the opposition seems to have spread across the campus fairly rapidly; what other reason were there that she was opposed after she was appointed--what caused the uproar?

DONOVAN: Well, what caused the uproar was the fact that the Students' Association believed that student and faculty input had been ignored by the regents, and that was the reason that student government expressed its opposition, and that was the entire purpose of student government's involvement in the opposition, and why they led the opposition after her appointment.

DSG: Solely on that principle, of ignoring the recommendations?

DONOVAN: Yes.

DSG: Because the Cactus brought up some other points; it said that these were points made by everyone from student senators all the way down to those who were not involved in the Students' Association directly. It said that she had decreased professors' salaries as punishment for political involvement; that she was out of touch with the campus; and that she had vetoed mandatory funding for student government. Were those really subsidiary reasons?

DONOVAN: Those were reasons that were expressed by various individuals. I guess what I'm trying to express is that the reason that student government opposed her was because student/faculty input had been ignored. Now there were several organizations that expressed opposition to her appointment, and in fact we found many groups that splintered off--we all kind of converged in one mass opposition because of her appointment, because student/faculty input had been ignored. There were other groups that wanted to express other reasons...which were really more personal reasons against her, and this is why several groups kind of splintered off. And in fact several of these splinter groups developed sort of an anger towards student government as a whole, because they felt that the student government was not coming out with other real issues. In fact, I think one of the issues that you did not mention that was a real issue brought up by another group was that they felt that Lorene Rogers represented the University's attitude against greatly recruiting minorities, and much of that was blamed on her. The position that I took on that was that those were problems that these people had against the University as a whole; they were not problems that were represented by her appointment as president.

DSG: You mentioned the splinter groups a moment ago...did you have Students Helping Academic Freedom at Texas (SHAFT) in mind as one of them?

DONOVAN: I don't think I could really label SHAFT as a splinter group, because SHAFT was probably a compilation of a lot of these groups that wanted to oppose Dr. Rogers' appointment for various reasons; and SHAFT took all of these reasons in--whereas student government would say, "We are opposing Dr. Rogers because the regents ignored student/faculty input," SHAFT made an effort to take in all the reasons, all the complaints that people had against Dr. Rogers, and they decided they really wanted to go against her appointment for any and all reasons, not just the principal reason.

DSG: What effect did SHAFT have on the way people viewed student government?

DONOVAN: Well, I think probably many people viewed SHAFT as a weakness on the part of student government, because student government, though present at all the rallies in opposition to Dr. Rogers...SHAFT seemed leading the ball, so to speak, on the opposition movement. So many people probably viewed it as a weakness. The way I regarded it at the time was that we would be missing the boat completely if we didn't stick to the real issue at hand, which was that the regents had ignored student faculty input. That was the weak point of student government, that it didn't have the power to enforce its recommendations, and in fact the recommendations were totally ignored when they were made.

DSG: One writer who has chronicled to some extent the 1970-1980 developments in student government wrote that after Dr. Rogers' appointment, "the ensuing protest movement was immediate and widespread, but Crabtree

refused to take an active role in it." Why did he say that?

DONOVAN: Probably that was from his perspective. I personally disagree, and think that the statement was unfair, and did not really represent my role. What I refused to take an active role in was SHAFT. I did refuse to take an active role in that organization, because I felt that they were confusing the real issue with several subsidiary issues that really were not Dr. Rogers' fault. The comments they were making, and the complaints they were making, many of which you named off, were problems that the University had, and that student government needed to deal with, but were not something that Dr. Rogers had established as ad interim president. The only problem that I had, and that I believe student government expressed publicly, was that student/faculty input had been ignored. And we did organize rallies, and we issued statements, and we lobbied statewide--not just in Austin, but we sent and funded travel expenses for people such as Sandy Kress and other people to go out to Corpus Christi and Houston and Dallas, and talk to Rotary Clubs and Texas Ex organizations, and explain to them what exactly was going on; we wanted them to understand the student point of view, and not just read about some radical student movement opposing the appointment of a president.

DSG: So student government really was very active in the opposition, alongside SHAFT.

DONOVAN: Yes.

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DSG: Let me point out one more thing to you from this same paper--and I'm not trying to put you on the defensive; I'm just curious....

DONOVAN: Sure; this is a good way to get the other side of the story.

DSG: He says that..."It was alleged at one point that Crabtree actually met behind closed door with the regents to discuss ways of quieting the student protest." Now he does not go on to say whether it was anything more than an allegation; he just presents it as that's the way it was. What's the story?

DONOVAN: I never met behind closed doors with the regents as a whole, and the only individual meetings I ever had with the regents were as lobby efforts for different projects that different projects that student government was trying to put forth. Specifically, in regard to the opposition to Dr. Rogers' appointment, I did approach Allan Shivers and I told him that I thought that, no matter what they did in regard to the appointment with Dr. Rogers...that we wanted to have input on a different system for selecting a University president, and we wanted to appoint our own people to that review committee, and he agreed. Those were the only kinds of meetings I ever had with the regents.

DSG: Do you remember that allegation ever being made?

DONOVAN: Never.

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DSG: What other campus issues did the Students' Association address itself to?

DONOVAN: Well, when I ran for student body president, I ran on a platform of three topics: student services, academic advancement, and equal opportunity. I based my whole student government program around those three issues.... The program that we projected, that [Vice-President] Lyn Breeland and I worked on, was centered on those three issues. In the area of academic achievement, we worked on specific things such as getting the teacher evaluation forms out of the files at the top of the Main Building and putting them down at the Undergraduate Library so students would know where to go, especially during preregistration periods. Also in the area of academics, we worked very much on teacher achievement awards where we would have a review panel, and we would actually have votes cast in various departments for teacher excellence awards. We felt this was a way of rewarding those teachers who had done a fantastic job; this was in contrast to the evaluation forms, which were an opportunity for students to warn other students against certain professors that they felt were not good....

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DSG: The Students' Association Constitution preamble states that one of the purposes of student government is to allow students "participation in the overall policy and decision making processes of the University." On student-related policy decisions, how much input did the Students' Association have? In other words, those things that the administration would decide that would affect students.

DONOVAN: I guess there were two primary ways that we handled that. One was through University committees. There is supposed to be a University committee for every possible facet of the decision-making process at the University, and to the extent that we did have students on those committees, and we could put forth our views, I guess we had some representation there; but as I mentioned before, the number of students in comparison with faculty and staff was relatively small. Then there was another way, which I felt was very significant. Dr. Brown and Dr. Duncan, who were at the time Vice-President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, met on a weekly or biweekly basis with me and Lyn Breeland to go over everything that was going on in student government that I thought they would be interested to know, and everything that was going on in the administration that they thought I would be interested in knowing about. We would just compare notes, and Dr. Brown would ask in what manner, if any, the administration could help out with some of our programs, and I would in turn keep him informed of the activities that we were working on.

DSG: Was the Students' Association ever able to initiate legislation on the University level?

DONOVAN: Yes, through the University Council students submitted legislation. And then there were various projects and proposals through the years where students would initiate something to go up through the Board

of Regents. Probably one of the most obvious that I worked on was mandatory funding; and of course I was unsuccessful, but the regents told me at the end of the vote that I lost the battle, but maybe not the war. Of course, at the time I felt the same way either way because we didn't have mandatory funding.... But yes, we could initiate policy. Oh, another good example...in the area of student services, we worked on increasing bicycle routes and bicycle racks for students who were good enough to bring bicycles instead of cars to the campus; we worked on improvements with the shuttle bus system; student government tours, which was an organization that I'm proud to say I started in 1972, during my freshman year, continued until student government died.

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We worked on an additional gynecologist at the Health Center. Now this was something that was definitely a student lobby effort. I met periodically with the director of the Health Center, and I talked to him about student health concerns there; and through our lobby efforts we also got an additional female doctor at the Health Center--some females had requested that they wanted to go to a woman doctor, as opposed to a male doctor; it was just a preference that they had. At the time there was only one woman doctor, and she didn't want to do any gynecological work, and of course it wasn't fair for any of us to dictate the type of practice that she could perform, so they put in another woman doctor instead.

DSG: What about off-campus activities? If you look at some of the administrations that you were describing earlier as further to the left--Dick Benson, Sandy Kress, Frank Fleming--they seemed to concentrate most of their activities off-campus: in the Legislature, the City Council, even the regents--but not as much on direct, University-related issues such as the Health Center and so on. Were you all involved in that kind of area?

DONOVAN: We were involved in it....

DSG: The reason I asked you is this--Sandy said that his administration tried to cover everything, but he said their weakest area was internal.

DONOVAN: Right. I think that Sandy and I probably contrast here. I was talking earlier about how the pendulum "swings"...I think Benson was probably more liberal than Kress; Kress was definitely more liberal than Fleming; and I was more liberal than Fleming. So it was kind of a weird swing; it doesn't have a particular method to it, but it is true that Benson focused probably both on internal and external, but more toward the external, and Kress definitely was much more external. Frank Fleming went the other way, and was almost exclusively internal, and then I was starting to get a combination of internal and external, but was still primarily internal affairs. But in answer to your question, we did concentrate efforts in an external manner by having the city lobby and the state lobby committees, and we did have bills that these committees kept up with; they would write Congressmen, and call them, and keep them informed with what the student government position was on these various bills. But it wasn't the same kind of external effort that was apparent

under Sandy Kress' administration.... We didn't fund these people to go to Washington, D.C., but we did keep a regular contact with Congressman [J.J. "Jake"] Pickle's office--probably Pickle more than [U.S. Senators Lloyd] Bentsen and [John] Tower--Pickle was very good about keeping up with what the students wanted. And we kept tabs on them, and kept track of what bills were coming up that were related to student issues. But it wasn't as publicized as it was during Kress' administration; of course Kress' administration brought HEW onto the campus, which was very highly publicized.

DSG: I asked you earlier whether you thought the Students' Association provided an effective voice for the students. What about turning it the other way around: put yourself in the shoes of the rank-and-file student--did his Students' Association function as his voice in the University?

DONOVAN: I still believe that student government was an effective voice ...for the average student there on campus. My philosophy on student government was that so long as student government was providing student services, then it was assisting a broader base of students on campus than it was if it focused primarily on external affairs, because the average student attending the University of Texas was going to look at "what does student government do for me?" They weren't going to look so much at what the student government president was espousing at some legislative hearing or committee meeting on whether or not ERA should be rescinded. What they were really going to focus on was right here at home, on "I don't have a place to park my bicycle," and "I don't have a place to deposit my Daily Texan"; those were the things that affected the students the most, and I think that under my administration we really put an emphasis on student services, more so than a lot of administrations.

DSG: So the students saw the Association as a way to get things done, a service?

DONOVAN: Right, and I do think that the average student is definitely affected by the lobby efforts of student government--I don't want to go on record as saying that the average student is only affected by the services, because they are also affected by what is being espoused by the student body president, what candidates are being endorsed--but generally the average student, I don't think, is going to feel that they are not represented if those statements are contrary to what they believe. I felt that as a whole, student government did represent the campus. There weren't very many controversial issues that came up during my administration, with the exception of the opposition to Dr. Rogers, and I still believe that the majority of the campus was in agreement with student government on that issue.

DSG: Aside from that issue, did the students--and I'm talking about students who were not in office--did they have a sense of being part of a cohesive whole, the UT Students' Association, or was it more just a general awareness of yes, it was there? I know that during a time of



high stimulus, such as the incident with Dr. Rogers, that would be true, but at other times, did the student feel like the Association was the voice for him, that he was a part of it?

DONOVAN: I'd say that without a major controversy...that the students felt more of a cohesiveness with their individual college than with the Students' Association, so probably I would answer your question in the negative, that the average uninvolved student probably didn't feel negative or positive towards the student government; they probably just felt like that was some extracurricular activity, some organization, that other students participated in, foreign to them.

DSG: Answer the same question for me, if you would, from the administration's point of view. How did they view the student government? Did they see it as representing the voice of the student body, and how much weight did that opinion carry?

DONOVAN: Ironically, we had much more recognition as The Student Leaders from the point of view of the administration than we did from the student body, because the student body was so large that everybody kind of connected up with their own peculiar organizations or their individual colleges. With the administration, they are constantly in the position where someone will say, "What do the students think about that?" And so they need a handful of students who they can contact....

DSG: Do you think that it's possible for an organization to be seen as representing the "official voice of the students" today on a campus of almost 50,000 people?

DONOVAN: Yes.

DSG: Do you think the administration would see it as such?

DONOVAN: I do, because I think though it's not necessarily in the administration's interest to have student government--they probably feel neither here nor there about whether there is a Students' Association representing the student body--I think once there is a student government they will recognize it as a student government, just as they did when I was in office, mainly because it IS the Students' Association; it would be the organization elected by the students.

DSG: What about people off-campus--the Legislature, the City Council--did they see the Students' Association as the official voice of the student body? How much weight did it carry with them?

DONOVAN: I believe that it carried a lot of weight, because I think politicians probably more than anyone understand that when it comes down to it, it's only going to be the people that vote that are going to be organized enough to put some pressure on anybody. So whether or not the student body president was elected by all 42,000--that was how many were there when I was there--I was still the person who was elected, and I was elected by the majority of the people who cared

enough to get themselves together and organize enough to go out and vote. And therefore to a politician, that meant a lot.

DSG: In times of trouble, when the Association came under, or when you personally came under fire, did the students tend to rally around the Association, or did they tend to condemn it, or where they pretty much neutral? In other words, how much support did they give the Association?

DONOVAN: You're talking more about internal troubles?

DSG: Right...in other words, today it seems like the trend is almost ...well, like a pack of wolves: as soon as students see something even slightly amiss in student government, they will pounce on it, and say, "See, it's not going to work. We shouldn't have a student government."

DONOVAN: I think as far as internal problems within student government, that probably the majority of students who look upon that feel negative towards student government. They feel that student government is weak, that if the people cannot see through all the little issues to the bigger issue of getting organized...people tend to condemn the immaturity.

DSG: So you wouldn't say that there was a terrific amount of support for the student government itself.

DONOVAN: Well, I'm really not saying that--I'm saying that there's no support for the infighting and power struggles. Student government loses credibility the more the infighting and power struggles are publicized. I really believe that, and maybe this is from my belief in the necessity of a government, period--but I really believe that the students are not against having a government; but they want it to be a legitimate government, and they want it to be a government that's going to have some power. I disagree with the way that the abolition of student government was handled; I disagree with the reasons that were projected for what was done. I believe that after my administration the student body was very, very disillusioned, because it became very obvious to them if it wasn't already that student government, who was this organization that was supposedly there to provide services and protect their interests, did not have as much power as we all would have liked to believe it had. So therefore there's a great feeling of disillusionment, and almost a feeling of rebellion, after that. In the spring of '76, my last semester as student body president, there was a lot of infighting going on, and I think student government lost a lot of credibility because of that. And coupled with the disillusionment that was left with the students, and this infighting, I think that is what got Jay Adkins elected. Now there's other people who really believe that Jay would have been elected anyway, but I believe that the reason he got elected was the disillusionment, the lack of power that student government had, and the infighting.

So then Adkins was elected, and then we were kind of in the situation that we are now, where everyone was sitting around saying, "O.K., prove yourself, student government--see what you can do." And [Judy]

Spalding took over, and what everybody that was in her administration really had to do to get the respect of the students back was to DO something; to be in the news all the time, to show people how the student government was assisting them, and be concentrating on the positive, and instead, it was just kind of a neutral attitude about student government during that period. It wasn't anything positive; nothing looked like it was going on to the average student, and they would just look at it and say, "Nothing's changed." You know, we had this year of Jay Adkins, and even people who wanted student government didn't want Jay Adkins elected as president; even they were disillusioned because nothing was happening. So I think that's how the abolition came about.

The reason I disagree with the reasoning of the people who were proponents of abolishing student government was that...the fallacy in their argument was that the University administration and the regents don't care whether there's a student government. They were saying, "If we can't have student government the way we want it, if we can't have the powers that we want it to have, we are going to abolish student government until we can get those powers." And my response to that was: "Who do you think is going to give you those powers? They aren't just going to say, 'Oh, you win; we want you all to have a student government so we're going to give you all these powers back.'" That's just not the way it works; they're going to have to fight in through the system.

.....

DSG: There were some allegations made against you during the spring-- I guess this is part of the infighting you were talking about--and exactly what they concerned is somewhat muddled in the print, so perhaps you can tell me...something about circumventing the Senate, and then that supposedly being in violation of the Constitution. What was the story behind that?

DONOVAN: The main allegations, and you're right, it was very muddled, because at the beginning even I did not myself know what the allegations were, and that caused a great deal of the problems--it's hard to prepare your defense when you don't know what the allegations of the plaintiff are--but the main allegation appeared to be that I had authorized the publication of a student government housing guide without the permission of the Student Senate, and several allegations ran around that, but that seemed to be the main thrust of the protest.

DSG: That you had appropriated funds for it?

DONOVAN: Right, and that I had authorized the actual publication without the permission of the Student Senate. In defense of that, I showed to the Student Senate the Constitution itself, which does not say that the student body president has to get permission from the Student Senate to do any activity such as that; the Bylaws, which do not require that; and then I showed them that despite the fact that I was not required to keep them apprised of my activities as president, that I did in fact apprise them of the situation, and I brought forth minutes of past Student Senate meetings in which I had--three, or four, or five meetings in a row--had informed the Student Senate of the student government housing

guide, and that someone had approached me and was willing to do it for free, and they would sell advertisements so that we would get paid back anything that we advanced for the publication; in fact, I worked through one of the student government committees, the Student Services Committee, on getting it organized. With that, the Student Senate exonerated me, and I think that it also came forward that the person behind the allegations was someone who was running for student body president that spring, and people realized that it had been a political function, to gain publicity, and in fact it didn't work, because that person didn't win.

DSG: Who was that?

DONOVAN: Well, there were several persons who were involved, but the person who ran and lost was [City Lobby Committee Chairman] Lee Sandoloski.

DSG: What did that do to the credibility of student government, even though you were exonerated?

DONOVAN: Oh, I think it was devastating to the credibility of student government, because when it's advertised all over that you don't have the power to even put forth your recommendations for University President..., then you have this in-house fighting in the spring.... I look back on it sometimes and wonder if it would have been better for student government as a whole if I had not fought--would it have been better if I had not fought back, and just let things be. Still, I don't think I really had a choice in the matter, because first of all you had the Daily Texan publicizing everything that was happening every single day for a period of two or three weeks. So no matter what would have happened, it would have been publicized; and I felt it was also a matter of personal integrity to show that I had been up front with the Student Senate throughout the entire term....

DSG: I guess to tie this all up, then...take the experience that you gained from your four years in student government and apply it to what's going on now, what you know about, and from what I've told you. How would you interpret the so-called "Hank phenomenon," and what prospects do you see for our now infant Students' Association in the future? What advice would you give to the new leaders?

DONOVAN: Well, I think the advice I would give to the new leaders is what all proponents of Hank were trying to say, which is "prove yourself." They probably have a greater burden upon them than I or any of the other student body presidents had, with the exception of perhaps the last administration, the one that followed Jay Adkins' administration; I think that administration had the same problems that these students now have, because the Arts & Sausages era is over, and now the students who are proponents of student government, the ones who really want it to be the voice of the students, are giving you the opportunity to go forward with it, and they've got to take the ball and run with it, and they've got to do it FAST, because they don't come up with some immediate successes, then they're dead.

DSG: What about control of the student services fee? Can our student government survive without it?

DONOVAN: Our student government cannot survive without some control. Now we may not ever see the situation back the way it was, where the fee was controlled entirely by students; but unless it's changed, there is a law on the books that required the University to have student input on the allocation of the student services fees. Now the administration, of course, could handle that any way they wanted to, and the way they handled it [my] year was...they brought me and the vice-president in to talk with them, and we put forward how we wanted certain things allocated. Again, it's just like any situation, your input is only so good as the publicity that will back you, meaning that I didn't have any power to force the administration to take my suggestions, but if student input is rejected, the Daily Texan is a very viable force to publicize this fact. The administrators, I believe, do not really desire to go against students; that's not their purpose, and they really do want to work with students. They don't want the adverse publicity. So generally, I'd say that if the students are approaching them in a logical, reasonable manner, then they will work with the students.

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DSG: Do you think that a power merely to recommend the division of the student services fee is enough?

DONOVAN: No. I think that it is a much more effective system if you have one final committee of students, faculty and staff, and that their recommendation is the final recommendation that is passed on up to the President [of the University], because otherwise you have a student group making recommendations, and you probably have staff persons making their own budgetary recommendations, and many times these recommendations are going to conflict. It's going to be a lot more effective if you have one unified recommendation that has student input that goes straight to the President, than just a review committee.

DSG: If you had to tell the new president of the Students' Association one thing to help him along and help the Association succeed, what would it be?

DONOVAN: Communicate.

DSG: With whom?

DONOVAN: The students; let them know what you're doing; let them know why you're doing it. If you fail to communicate, what you're doing, all your good intentions, will be worthless.

## JUDY SPALDING

February 25, 1983

Although all of the interviews I conducted were interesting, informative, and enjoyable, none was more fascinating than my talk with Judy Spalding. President of the Students' Association during 1977-78, Spalding had the dubious distinction of presiding over the student government's final year of existence; it was abolished by vote of the student body as her term ended. Theories on what brought about the abolition abound, and many of them were brought out in this discussion.

I found Judy to be remarkably candid in her evaluation of her term and the events of that year. As with the other former presidents whom I interviewed, hindsight seems to have given her a better understanding of the workings of the student governance process; it has also helped her identify mistakes that she and others involved in the government made. And although she pointed out, near the end of our meeting, that she did not want to appear bitter, her tone and comments seemed to me at times to indicate otherwise.

Judy Spalding, who completed her B.A. in Journalism in 1980, is now a first-year law student at Southern Methodist University. We met at a restaurant near the S.M.U. campus and, after talking for nearly an hour about recent developments at UT, we moved to a quiet classroom, where she told me about that difficult year.

DSG: Normally, I have started out asking people about the general organization of the governmental structure during their term. But since there were so many changes during the year previous to you, I'll couch it like this: what did you inherit from Jay Adkins and Skip Slyfield when you came into office? What did they leave you?

SPALDING: To an extent, a healthy distrust of everybody and everything, generally, and specifically with the University; but, simultaneously, in a lot of cases the distrust had gone beyond a healthy state. There were a lot of jaded students around, people who were outright contemptuous of anything but Art & Sausages; that was a really difficult thing to deal with, because our approach was entirely different from theirs, as you can imagine. We were faced with a lot of people who wouldn't stay on but under the terms of Art & Sausages, and that just could not be. So what we inherited was quite a conglomeration, some good, some bad; a really unique situation.

DSG: Since I probably won't get to interview Jay...were you active in the student government during the Art & Sausages year?

SPALDING: Not in the Senate; I was on the Women's Committee and had been active in student government all along, as soon as I hit the campus in '74--mostly on the committees and things like that, and then working with Carol [Crabtree]. That's why I was saying that there was

to an extent a healthy disrespect for authority and the powers-that-be both at UT and in human nature in general; I saw it every day...sometimes Jay would come in--more likely than not it was Skip, the vice-president, who I really had a lot of respect for; he was a very good person...and just general discussions, and seeing how the people on the committees interacted with them. They seemed very comfortable, really seemed to get a lot done, and I think it was because they didn't seem to take themselves too seriously.

DSG: The student government as a whole got a lot done?

SPALDING: Certain individuals. It was not a lax year, by any means. I know a lot of people would have that impression, and think that we didn't pull it out, and that's why it was abolished, and I don't think that was the case at all....

My impression of what they accomplished that year was that whatever Jay and Skip and, to a lesser extent, certain members of the Senate, were involved in, they would make it a point every once in a while to remind people with whom they were working that they had a different approach than your regular political hack. They were FUNNY political hacks; they were hacks, just the same, and I will defend to the death their right to be hacks; but they were hacks. A lot of people would have you believe that they were not, but they were. Just a different animal--clowns. But at any rate, I remember many times Jay would come in to TSP Board meetings, and say just bizarre things; everybody thought, "My God, this man is crazy. He has simply lost his mind; it's like a nightmare come true." You know, we're sitting in the Board meetings, and somebody starts singing--he didn't go quite that far, but he did some bizarre things; and yet, there was a message to it.

I remember seeing them in blackface once, during the Blackprint issue--it was an attempt by Black students on campus to get funding from the TSP Board to print a newspaper specifically for and about the Black community on campus. And the Students' Association contributed two or three thousand dollars, if I remember correctly, over a two or three year period to the cause, along with TSP, and it worked for a while, but then the people who had been active graduated and it kind of fizzled out.... During one of those many discussions, I know that Jay appeared in the Texan in blackface, with shoe polish or something; really in a sense very hateful, but that was not his idea at all. Another time he narrowed down the entire University community to a community of shoes...I think he insisted that that be included as a part of the TSP meeting record, that the student body president was narrowing life down to shoes. This was during "Earth Shoes," and some of us had patent leathers, some of us had boots--and all of a sudden, every member of the Board was looking down at their shoes to see what message it was conveying! Very strange stuff; and I'm not saying it was particularly brilliant or anything, but it was a unique approach.

DSG: What was his message?

SPALDING: That one, I really don't know; I really couldn't say.

DSG: In the history, people go back and look at Jay Adkins and they say, "Oh, yeah, he and Skip were the clowns. They made a complete mockery of student government and they were trying to abolish it." That wasn't the aim at all, it doesn't seem like. What were they really out to do--once they got elected?

SPALDING: Well, I think that's where Jay and Skip began to split, because I think Skip clearly wanted to continue in the mockery vein, and I think that's why I personally felt a closer tie with him than with Jay, because Jay started to take himself very seriously, and a lot of other people in the group did too. And by the end of his term, the man was--a hack. By then, I think, Skip had either left town or was leaving--I hear he's in the Marines now, or something. But the message they were trying to convey was more than that it was a mockery. I think that there were other approaches, and I think that a lot of the mockery trend was simply to get other people's attention. They had the attention of the student body, probably more so than anybody else had in a long time. Now, I'm sure that each year, there was one issue that caused as many people who cared on campus to focus on the Students' Association in some form or fashion, with some good, some bad; but with Jay and Skip, I think their just having been elected was the focus...

DSG: Do you think they intended to get elected? Jay is quoted at one point, I think in a story in UTmost, the campus magazine, as saying something to the effect of "two days before the election, we realized 'My God, we may win!'," and he compared it to the feeling that the cockroach in the kitchen must have when the light first comes on. Now whether it was a direct quote or not, I don't know...

SPALDING: No, it may be a direct quote; how sincere it is, I think, is the issue. I think that Jay always wanted to win; I don't think that Skip did.... The campus was ripe for the types of messages that Jay and Skip and all of Arts & Sausages...it never was clear--Art & Sausages? Arts & Sausage?--one's plural, the other's not; it's always been misprinted in the Texan...I'll say "A & S." The time was right for them; you've got to realize that it was an entire ticket; it was not just Jay and Skip. It trickles down to people who are running for General and Comparative Studies...or to colleges with one senator...like Pharmacy. I don't know if they had an A & S candidate, but just imagine, you know, when you've got these levels of impact in the Student Senate, and you've got these hot candidates, and they can get their message across to the folks who are running at-large to an extent; but the further away it gets from them, the less control they have on them; and by the time you got down to these lower echelons, you had some crazy people, I mean nuts--we're not going to mention names, but, I mean, these folks were crazy; it was like a calling card: "I am an A & S candidate--these people are speaking my language..." I don't think they ever quite caught on that Jay and Skip didn't normally speak this way, and didn't normally convey these types of messages. What I'm saying is that it was just a big mess--you had a lot of people saying that they were a



member of this party who Jay and Skip had never even heard of, and it was just a mixed message that was coming across to absolutely everybody, and it didn't work out too well. But if nothing else, it did convey generally a message of "let's not take ourselves seriously; don't trust the University--they don't trust us..."

DSG: Dissatisfaction with the status quo?

SPALDING: It must have been.

DSG: You said the time was right for this--I'm curious why. What was the matter at the end of Carol's term, after the Lorene Rogers controversy?

SPALDING: Well, SHAFT and all that was in the fall of '75...just that whole year; the SHAFT thing and the related incidences. And I'm not at all, by any stretch of the imagination, and I hope if nothing else comes through that this does, that I'm not saying anything bad about Carol's administration the entire time. I think she got a real bad deal from a lot of people, including myself...

DSG: In what way?

SPALDING: Well, she had a tough year; that whole thing about Dr. Rogers, when she personally supported her...well, she didn't really; no students supported her--a few did, but very few--supported the method by which Dr. Rogers was appointed. But a lot of people realized that there was nothing we could do about it; a lot of people knew that there was nothing we could substantively do about it, but we'd be damned if we were going to lie down and take it. That was the impetus for SHAFT. Then SHAFT started to pick up all kinds of people, just as I'm saying about A & S--picking up all these peripheral groups, and all of the sudden everybody's jumping on the bandwagon--that's the exact same thing that happens with any other student movement, and that's, in a lot of ways, why the Students' Association should have been disbanded, or something, to try to straighten everything out before it just kept getting worse. And it's the type of thing that the University administration just LOVES, I mean, they eat it up! I'm convinced of that...because it's so divisive. Every SHAFT meeting got to be such a nightmare--we had people who we didn't know who they were, "representing" different parts of the world--we didn't know if we were unsafe; I mean, these folks could have pulled out knives, machetes, all kinds of weapons, and we wouldn't have known what to do. There were so many different interests involved that had absolutely nothing to do with Dr. Rogers' appointment. A lot of people were there to oppose Dr. Rogers personally, which was never the original idea of SHAFT, and then it started to pick up absolutely everybody who ever had a grudge against the University.

The whole time, Carol was supportive of Dr. Rogers and wanted to work with her--she was president, and she had absolutely every right to feel that way. A lot of us, myself included, felt that that was a real turncoat thing to do, and tied Carol's hands in a lot of ways. And even if we didn't do it quite that way, I'm sure that in a lot of

ways we did emasculate her term. We went through a whole procedure of getting students to sign up [for committees], and screening processes, and voting by the Senate.... Well, we did the worst thing possible, and every time I think of this I just shudder. What we did was--there was a whole boycott, you understand; everybody was supposed to shut down, and they were supposed to do it until she resigned! Now, I'm not a parent, but I could equate this to...

DSG: ...holding your breath until you turn blue.

SPALDING: Absolutely; just the whole stupid approach. We told people "We will go ahead and put your names down; the Senate will go ahead and approve you; but you can't serve." A lot of people did anyway, and who could blame them!? A lot of people were genuinely concerned about these student committees; a lot of them were just trying to pad their resume--whatever the reasons were, they went ahead and served. But a lot of them didn't, and what you have is just mass chaos. And the Dean of Students office was coming forward and presenting names to Dr. Rogers and she was approving them, so that the students couldn't turn around and say, "Oh no, you're ignoring these decisions; what about student input?" You know, what we were putting them into was a situation where they couldn't win while, of course, neither could we. It was a big mess, and Carol was opposed to it throughout the whole time, and lost a lot of ground. All of us wasted an awful lot of energy on the whole thing, and it was just stupid, because--nobody won. Well, we all know who won, but it clearly wasn't the students, and I can't even count how many hours we must have spent on the whole thing. Probably, it got into a couple thousand dollars that the Students' Association spent on--get this--"SENDING PEOPLE ALL OVER THE STATE TO DISCUSS IT"! I mean, this was a hot plan of mine, and I know a lot of people who took it all very seriously. It involved students from all kinds of backgrounds who would go back to their home towns with different faculty members, and would speak to chambers of commerce and Kiwanis Clubs...

DSG: Sandy mentioned that...

SPALDING: Sandy wasn't around.

DSG: He said he was involved in some capacity.

.....  
SPALDING: Well...he may have welcomed a student group up here and helped them find places, but he along with literally hundreds of former students got involved in it--and we're talking about way back; I can't even count how many people I got in contact with who graduated in the '40s and '50s who were now middle-aged members of one of these clubs, who were glad to welcome us into their homes and put us up. We had national coverage. We were on the national news. There were marches and rallies and teach-ins and boycotts and all kinds of things, and it was one of those things that for the first week, it was great, and then, after everything died down, you think, "My God, now what do we do? What have we done?", and there was Carol throughout all of it,

really in a horrible position.

So in the fall of that year, you could not have escaped noticing that there was something going on, because it was all in uproar. Lots and lots of classes were canceled; signs were everywhere; marches, rallies, all of that, and you just can't overlook that sort of thing. And then it got to the point where, again, we were taking ourselves too seriously.... That's the type of environment that was in existence at the time that A & S raised its ugly head: just a lot of chaos, and a lot of people who, I think, jumped into that SHAFT thing because they were frustrated hippies, and saw this as their chance to fight against the Viet Nam War, well, I mean, my God! how many years had it been over by then? But I can't count how many people came up and said, "You know, I was in sixth grade when we marched against the Cambodia bombings, and I feel like a part of it," well, that wasn't what we were doing at all, but it was their way of saying "I marched," and not having to say what they marched for. And it was a good thing that we did in a lot of ways--academic freedom...you know, we were always saying, "academic freedom is dead," and academic freedom, I think, was never really alive at UT, and you can't be dead until you've been alive, so that was a kind of misnomer. But people who took themselves very seriously to the point of absurdity--A & S gave it a name, acted it out every chance they had, mottos, uniforms, shows, all kinds of things.

And that's why they won: the people who were running against them didn't know how to laugh--at themselves, at each other, and tried to fight them in a traditional sense. I mean, how can you stand up and have a debate with someone who is juggling, or telling you, "Let's change the motto [on the Main Building] from 'Ye Shall Know the Truth and the Truth Shall Make You Free' to 'Money Talks'?" That is just perfect; what can you say in response to that? But these folks would try. They wouldn't go the extent of saying "I think that the cost would be astronomical." There was one guy who did fight it in a sense of humor, but by the time he started, it came to be too late. But anyway.... You asked your question about twenty minutes ago.

DSG: Well, I knew this would probably be the longest interview I'd have--it's a critical period for student government from a history standpoint.

So now, Judy Spalding's president; you inherited a bit of chaos from A & S...

SPALDING: We inherited chaos and we got student funding, absolutely out of the blue. We had not been under mandatory funding, since under Kress...

DSG: So you had been on a separate optional check-off?

SPALDING: Yes; I don't remember how much--it was probably no more than about five dollars.

DSG: And there was good response for that from the students?

SPALDING: I honestly don't remember; all I know is that we were not anticipating being put on mandatory funding. I was elected in March, and we got it in April. We didn't ask.

DSG: Why was that?

SPALDING: Well, there are different theories on it. One was that now that A & S was out, the regents figured ANYBODY--I mean, that was the worst thing that could have happened, and since student government survived, let's reward them by making sure they have money. Because these folks raised money; Jay and Skip and all them did raise a lot of money; and they had to go out and be fools to do it, because that's the only way you can get money in the first place. Maybe the whole idea of the regents was that they wanted to give us some money so that we wouldn't have to go out and focus all the attention on the Students' Association. Another theory is that they figured I was going to be real harmless; what could I do?--and when I say "me," I mean the Association. And by comparison--I mean, look at us; we got ourselves abolished! So that was an accurate assumption, if that's really what the reason was. That was in '77...I don't know if there was some kind of time frame behind the regents' doors--"let's keep them off [funding] for three or four years and see what happens." I don't know if there was something else that we could have done that they knew we could have done to raise money.

DSG: But it wasn't on student request?

SPALDING: If there was a student request, then I think that I would have had to appear at the regents meeting and requested it; and I know that I attended the regents meeting, but I don't think that I said a word. I don't think anybody did. I really don't think that we formally requested it. But this had been three or four years, and we'd always been requesting it; it was nothing new.... All I know is that, after the regents meeting, the news people came to my office, and set everything up, and said, "OK, now what are you going to do with this money?" And I had been talking, and I just stopped, and I said, "Turn off the cameras and the tapes, because I have no idea." And then they said, "No, really, we need an answer," and I said, "No, really, you don't understand. We weren't anticipating this at all! I'll make up something, but you have to know that--this is how out of the blue it is--that I can't even come up with a good old political hack-type answer." That's how in shock we were.

DSG: What did they give you, a part of the student services fee, or was it a separate allocation?

SPALDING: I really don't remember. We weren't hurting for funds.... I guess student government must have been included in that, but I really don't know what amount.... It was enough.

DSG: How did you set up your governmental structure, committee-wise? Jay and Skip had removed about half the committees....

SPALDING: I think we had about twelve, maybe sixteen committees...we created a couple of committees, or rather, reinstated some. We put new emphasis on the student-faculty committees; finally got the Student Services Fee Committee; just had a lot of different appointments.

DSG: You've talked a little bit about the degree of student participation in the government during the previous years. What about during your year? What was the motivation of the people who served in the Senate and the committees for participating? Were they trying to pad their resumes, or were they going for personal prestige, or was it more "now that we've been through the chaos of A & S, let's see if we can get it back on its feet again"?

SPALDING: Probably a little bit of all that, but most of it would be your classic political hack--padding his resume.

DSG: In fact, I think you had a...

SPALDING: ...Texan quote?

DSG: A Texan quote, yes.

SPALDING: That was, uh, February first or second. This is just great: the day it came out was the day that the committee came forth to abolish the Students' Association...

DSG: Here it is--February 1, 1978. Very good... "SPALDING TAGS LEADERS OF ASSOCIATION 'HACKS'."

SPALDING: But what Charlie neglected to put in that article...isn't that Charlie Rose?

DSG: Charlie Rose, right...

SPALDING: It's weird what I remember. Charlie was great; he would say, "Would you say that the bombing in Cambodia is terrible?" And I'd say, "Well, I don't know...", and he'd say, "NO," and he'd show me with his pen and say, "WOULD YOU SAY...", and then I looked down, and there it was: "The Bombing In Cambodia Is Terrible." The man would have your quotes already written out!

DSG: Such as "low-caliber political hacks and resume-padders"?

SPALDING: Oh, no, no: that was a fairly accurate article, except that he neglected to mention that I said that "I am a hack." You know, that was probably the most important thing...I had to spend the whole day going around telling people, "I AM A HACK, O.K.!?! Just back off! You're a hack too, but don't think that I was saying that you're a hack and I'm not," because it's a horrible insult. I have just a real deep feeling that so many people in the Students' Association would deny to their deaths that they were hacks. And being a hack isn't really as

bad as it sounds....

DSG: What exactly do you mean when you say somebody is a "hack"?

SPALDING: Your classic resume-padder--backstabbing--uninformed--prejudiced--unimaginative--self-serving shithead. Maybe I could find another word besides "shithead"...

DSG: Anything you left out?

SPALDING [laughing]: No, no; that should encompass it all. Self-serving is probably the biggest part of it. People who I think would honestly sit back before they vote on anything, or get involved in any project, or whatever, and think, "What is this going to do for Me?" And I don't mean in terms of "I have 20 extra hours a week; what percentage of my time can I dedicate to this cause?"; it's not that; it's "How far will this push me? How many people will I meet who I can use when I run for \_\_\_\_\_? Or who I can use to write recommendation letters for me? Or who I will know in later life?" That by itself isn't too bad, but then when you add in all the other things, they reach a point when they start picking out ideas that they have absolutely no idea what they're talking about--blasting other people just for the sake of it, dividing up groups into classes and socioeconomic groups and things like that; and then it's just a bunch of kindergarteners, and worse, and you feel like a babysitter, and nothing ever gets accomplished because they're all so busy fighting.... In these meetings, people would make sure that they were heard, and make sure that they were quoted in the minutes, and things like that. Vote With Comment, that was a real common thing, although I think that it was over by the time I was there. But for several years, there was a classic "vote with comment" in the Student Senate; and the secretary would duly record all these precious words, until one year the parliamentarian said that there was nothing in Robert's Rules of Order that said there was such a thing as a Vote With Comment....

So the classic group was hacks, and then a lot of people who really wanted to get involved in it--and I would like to think that you couldn't do any better a job than I did in getting people from all groups, from all walks of school, people who weren't in groups, people who had just walked in off the street--well, we interviewed about 200 or 300 people for the Students' Association committees and the faculty committees, and I felt real good about the group, and I probably had an extra sense of care, because of the whole fiasco with SHAFT. I wanted to compensate for all the months that there were no students on the committees. During Jay's year, I think there must have been students on these committees; I don't know what the procedure was.... But we had a lot of people who just wanted to get involved. We had the Legislature halfway over, so there was some need for the State Lobby, but as always their concentration was going to fizzle out in June, certainly by comparison. And I know that Jay had emphasized state lobbying, and you'd be a fool not to while the Legislature's meeting down the street from you. So there were some ongoing things that we inherited that were fine; but there were a lot of things that were just in chaos. And it

was a horrible campaign against Jim Boone--he's who I beat...

DSG: In the runoff?

SPALDING: Right. There was something kind of nasty on that...I figured out that the average freshman was in fourth grade when he [Boone] was a freshman. Because, I mean, the man was 28; now I'm 28 today...

DSG: You were 22 at the time, when you wrote the campaign material.

SPALDING: I was a baby.

DSG: I'm only 21 now; where does that put me? [laughter]

SPALDING: Well, then, think about you running against me, and think about how strongly you would feel that you would be able to represent [the students better]...you know, look out on that campus, and see how many people there are your age, how many thousands; and the few thousands--isn't that weird, a FEW thousand--who are my age, and you'd see that in your mind, there is a very clear split here. Now, take that one step further, and you think, "My God, who cares?" But at the time, everything matters and everybody cares.

DSG: Especially if you want to get elected.

SPALDING: That's right. Absolutely. So anyway, Jim had a lot of people who were former friends of mine, and attracted a certain type of person, who I did not and did not want to attract. Jay, as I've intimated, had turned pretty much completely against A & S, and took himself so seriously that he endorsed Jim Boone. Now, don't interpret that to mean that I was mad at him for not endorsing me, because the last thing I wanted was any connection with A & S.

DSG: I read his endorsement in the campaign flyer.

SPALDING: And it was serious, wasn't it?

DSG: Well, it was in a lighthearted tone, but serious in what it said.

SPALDING: Yeah; by that point, that's how Jay was communicating.

DSG: What was your motivation for running?

SPALDING: For running? I was a hack--first and foremost. A real deep desire to try some ideas out to see how many people could get involved at one time without there being a crisis; and to really look into the possibility of moving off campus. That was something that a lot of people had kicked around for several years...

DSG: Moving the student government off campus?

SPALDING: Yes; making it a non-University-sponsored student group.

DSG: How could that have been?

SPALDING: Well, you'd have to be damn good; you'd have to be DAMN good to get the funding--you're talking about practically begging on the streets from the students. But a lot of people were convinced that if the services that we provided were as good as we thought we could provide, then we could survive off campus. And this is an idea that, like I said, had been kicked around for YEARS; and the folks who would like to believe that "they abolished the Students' Association" will never know--and I don't care--but they'll never know that theirs was not an original idea, because, clearly, abolition of the Students' Association is coupled with moving off campus. This was something that a lot of people had considered for a long time. And to get the funding out of the blue, the way we did--that may have been why we got the funding: we always were positive that we were bugged...

DSG: "We don't fund what we don't control" [Frank Erwin], and what we fund, we control?

SPALDING: Uh-huh. So it would just make it real lucrative for us to stay on campus; I mean, "Here's a carrot...", you know? And you get the idea that it would be kind of dumb for us to get off campus, but we still considered it, and at the time I was running, it was a very important idea to me, and to a lot of people. That was something that I really wanted to kick around. But when you get into the day-to-day of it, you lose track of everything, and you get into petty politics, and you end up never having dinner at home--never; you end up flunking every class that you have; ulcers; you know, the whole bit. And you think the whole time, "OK, you can't complain; you ASKED for this." But you do get overwhelmed by the pettiness of it all, and then you lose sight of everything you held so precious mere months before. So then the pettiness of the Student Senate came in, and I couldn't stand it anymore; I really felt like I was babysitting, so I gave it to Marc Luzzatto, the vice-president. Well, he interpreted that to mean that I was acquiescing to Marc Luzzatto, which was probably the very last thing I ever intended to do. I stopped going to Senate meetings for a while, but then people started screaming at me for not going, and I should have just said, well, something obscene to them, but I didn't.

DSG: You let him preside over the Senate.

SPALDING: Yeah, because there was no reason on earth for me to preside. And the office of vice-president had just become a...a...nothing. It didn't seem right, and I wasn't just real inclined to sit every Wednesday--and I'd attended so many stupid Senate meetings that I knew it was not going to be an ego trip every week. So I just said, "Here, take this; I don't want it."

DSG: He said later on in a newspaper article, I think about the time the abolition movement came around, "If we would have had a dynamic leader this year, we would not have run into this problem now."



SPALDING: That's probably...well, I never thought of the abolition as a problem. And clearly, Marc was not a dynamic leader, so that's accurate.

DSG: You think he was evaluating himself, or you?

SPALDING: I think he SHOULD have been evaluating himself.

DSG: You were talking before about getting all the people to participate in the committee system...would you say, on the whole, that the Students' Association was pretty well representative of the students?

SPALDING: I do; I really think so. I was real proud of that.

DSG: Not only cross-section-wise, but also as far as voter turnout?

SPALDING: I really think so. That's just from remembering many times of looking out of my office during projects that were going on at the smattering of people; people who would attend the Senate meetings or the special meetings or special projects that we had--just groups of people that I think weren't normally involved before; and voting... voting's hard to say; you never really know.

DSG: What was voter turnout like?

SPALDING: ...I honestly don't remember. I know it declined; each year it got a little bit worse, except Carol's runoff, I think, was pretty high...

.....  
Maybe 12% of the campus voted during the referendum, but that's just an isolated figure. I suspect that that vote had a higher turnout than any recent elections. There was a definite trend towards decrease.

DSG: How would you describe the Association's relationship with the Board of Regents while you were president? Did you still have the liaison committee, or any kind of a liaison between the Association and the Board of Regents?

SPALDING: I had been attending the regents meetings since Carol, since '75...

DSG: As a representative of the Students' Association?

SPALDING: Oh, anyone can attend. The only time you'd ever be a representative would be when you were an officer in the Association....

DSG: But when you were president, were you attending as a representative; I mean, were you allowed to speak? How did they view your input?

SPALDING: We spoke. They agreed to abolish the Students' Association; I stood there and begged them to, and then a lot of people stood up and

said "please don't." I'm not going to say that because I said "do it," they did it--my ego's not THAT big! It was really no big deal; if you never expected much, you weren't surprised. I'll tell you, when Lady Bird [Johnson] got off, that was the worst thing that could have ever happened to the University; that woman...I think next to Dr. [Margaret] Berry, I admired Lady Bird the most of any professional, period. She was practically crying when Dr. Rogers' appointment [was made]...it was amazing....

DSG: She was one of the three who voted against it...

SPALDING: Still, talking about it sends chills up and down my back. And Carol went up to her and grabbed her hand, and Lady Bird had tears in her eyes, and she said, "Carol, I'm so sorry." I mean, we were all crying--men, women, everybody; we were saying, "Oh my God, what are we going to do?" So I always measure regents meetings against that.

DSG: I'm curious...this is off the subject, but.... I asked Governor Shivers, "Why was student-faculty input ignored?" And he said, "Well, it wasn't ignored; we listened to them for several months, and met with them, took their input." And I said, "But she wasn't on the list--why did you pick her?" "Well, we felt like she was best qualified for the job." He said it like, that's IT; so I dropped it. What was the story behind that?

SPALDING: I don't really know; no one I've ever talked to quite knows. If you ever want to know, I think Janie Strauss would be a real good place to start--Janie Strauss McGarr...

DSG: As in Cappy?

SPALDING: Yep. Cute, huh? [laughing] God bless love! [gagging sound] Hopefully, that won't come across on the tape.

DSG: I don't know how to spell it.

SPALDING: But anyway, she was on the selection committee...and a woman, what was her name, Doris somebody--no one was real sure where she came from. And I think that may have been all on that committee. Of course there were other committees--I mean, there were committees to study the committees, but they were the official committee...

.....  
DSG: So no one really knows why Dr. Rogers was selected.

SPALDING: Well, they're consistent, I'll tell you that. They have only said that, openly: "That's right, she wasn't on the list, you're absolutely right. And yes, we know what all we promised, but we felt that she was best for the University." That's all I know. I'm not being evasive; that's ALL I know.

DSG: OK--how about your relationship with the administration?

SPALDING: They had some goofy...we had this running meeting every week; why I cooperated with it, I'll never know. It was dumb! We'd just sit around and chat...

DSG: Who we?

SPALDING: [Jim] Duncan, [David] McClintock, [James] Hurst--wonderful, wonderful man, a psychologist--anyway, we'd sit around every week and kind of discuss what we were doing, what's going on. Marc and I tried to be very selective, of course; you don't want to say, "...and then we're going to make a statement against you." And Dr. Duncan would always say, "You know, you really ought to apologize to Dr. Rogers," and I would just laugh at him--I mean, come on, I had nothing to say to her; it was just absurd. But it was that type of tone.

DSG: It was an antagonistic relationship with the administration?

SPALDING: No, not really; just in certain areas. I wouldn't call it antagonistic; I would call it "cool." They all had real, real classy ways of turning around and stabbing you in the back. Nothing was ever accomplished by standing up and saying, "These people stabbed me in the back." After the first few times, a better approach was just don't communicate with them--well, very rarely. So I would say it was a cool relationship. I'm serious, and I don't know if anybody else has ever said this to you, but we were all convinced that the whole place was bugged, because it was just amazing how many times we'd be discussing things, and they'd be mentioned to us; answers given when we didn't ask questions; things like that, just really bizarre. So with that type of paranoia--I'll clearly admit that this was a really odd approach--but we felt like they knew what we were doing anyway, so what need was there to discuss it?; just let it surface. I don't know how else to answer this...there was just nothing to be accomplished. Jim Hurst was a wonderful person, and tried as best he could; and in his own way, at the time, McClintock was still salvageable, and Rich [Heller] was, but Jim Duncan--he's now with the system, isn't he?--....

Anyway, I remember those meetings; I remember some students on search committees, things like that that we participated in.

DSG: I was going to ask you about that, your relationship with the faculty and staff on committees and so forth...

SPALDING: Pretty good. I always enjoyed those committees immensely.

DSG: Did they seem to have a mutual respect?

SPALDING: I think so; I really do. Now, after it left the committee and went on to the administration, then we all knew it was out of our hands; but at least we were in that group together.... Those search committees are very good; you do a lot. But then, once you've made your recommendation to the administration, they turn around and stab you in the back, so it didn't really matter. What I'm saying is at that point, you've all spent weeks and in some cases months working

together--the faculty and the students--trying to dig up information, attack it in a cohesive fashion, things like that. So those types of projects were wonderful.

DSG: Were you represented on the University Council?

SPALDING: Yes.

DSG: Did the students really have a voice, given what the relationship was?

SPALDING: Not good; they never did. I mean, they would listen to you, but those things were so big...and the minutes would come out, and they'd be so thick, mostly with roll call and things like that. Marc Luzzatto spent more time in that than I did, the reason being that that just didn't attract me as being particularly helpful in any respect.

DSG: Did the Association, during your term, have any kind of control over the allocation of the student services fee?

SPALDING: We were just starting. We had a fairly candid series of meetings between the students and again, McClintock, I think Hurst attended occasionally, and several other people. But they were fairly candid and listened to the requests, the breakdowns of the budgets of the existing groups...

DSG: Did you not have any power to allocate to begin with?

SPALDING: Right.

DSG: None at all.

SPALDING: Just surface; that was probably the only sad part about the abolition, was that we had just gotten the committee.

DSG: Do you know when it was that that was [first] taken away?

SPALDING: It was never there when I was at the University of Texas. In the Student Lobby Committee, there was always a bill trying to create a Student Services Fee Committee.

DSG: And there was no student input on it whatsoever.

SPALDING: Not to my knowledge.

DSG: OK, I'm sorry; you were saying....

SPALDING: Then it finally passed.

DSG: That you would have a committee with--what powers? Advisory, or what...?

SPALDING: Since we never really finished, I'm going to say I don't remember. I'm embarrassed to tell you that. I don't know whether it was advisory or if it was full. I just don't remember...I'd like to think that it was full, but.... See, my term ended about April 1, and of course it had already been abolished by then--that was real funny: Roberto Alonzo never got over the shock, and the guy who he had picked to be his AA [administrative assistant] went around saying, "My God, you people are acting like there's no more student government or anything!", because Roberto was having all these interviews and all this, and everyone was saying, "My God, there IS no Students' Association." It was really kind of unfortunate. But anyway, he and his group really never quite comprehended that there was no need to have committee meetings and all that, because there was nothing left. Sad.

But anyway, the Student Services Fee Committee had not finished its term out, so we never reached the point of finding out.

DSG: How important would you say that power is, to allocate the fee?

SPALDING: If it's complete, if it's not just an advisory capacity, it's more than 50%--I'd say it's 75%--but it's not the whole ball of wax.

DSG: What if it's just an advisory capacity?

SPALDING: It's better than nothing, and yet, to an extent, a lot of people get sucked into the feeling of "Oh, well, they SAY we're advisory, but really we're the final word here." And then they yell and scream 'cause we're not.

DSG: That was true at one time...

SPALDING: Yes. Rumor has it; I never saw it.

DSG: Well, it was long, long before you were in school...

SPALDING: When I was in fourth grade.

DSG: Even before that... The student government submitted the recommendation, and it was pretty much a rubber stamp from there.

SPALDING: That's true.

DSG: Besides the ones that you've already talked about, what other sorts of campus-related issues did the Association address itself to during your term? What were the main programs?

SPALDING: Well, we had the Students' Association Film Program; that was always very good.... The garage sale was not effective at all. We had a warehouse, that was wonderful and I really wished somebody had picked that up...the Co-Op owned some warehouses over in East Austin, and we rented one of the warehouses from them--we almost went into two; we started advertising in April, so if we'd had more time it would have. At the end of the school year, when people started

moving out who were coming back to school, they'd come in and leave their stuff, and we'd section off an area and give them a receipt... and they came back in August and got it out--you know, bicycles, mattresses, all kinds of things, kitchen stuff--for people who didn't want to drag it halfway around the country. And if you needed to get into it during the summer, you could do that. We rented it out, I think, per foot. It was very, very effective; just wonderful, and we felt really good about it. Of course, all kinds of hell could have broken loose in terms of liability had anything happened, but I know that we did everything we could in trying to foresee any possible accidents. But anyway, that was something we were real proud of.

The book sale, that was Marc's, and as I understand it, was very effective; and he said that it was patterned after what he knew from what he had experienced up here, at S.M.U., and from what I've seen here, it's very true--it is a very effective program.... It worked out fine. We had a plant sale that made a lot of money; the Halloween dance was great--we all had a lot of fun doing that. We made money; it was not much, but I know we made money, and I thought we were going to lose. But it was just something that was fun; a lot of the Students' Associations in the past, aside from Skip and Jay, hadn't done anything that was just fun, something silly. We wanted an all-University dance, and we had it; I mean, there were people from everywhere, and it was by no means just the sororities and fraternities. A lot of people had suspected that the only people who would show up would be the Greeks, but it wasn't that way at all. We had all kinds of things: a beauty pageant, a costume contest and all--it was just silly, but it was fun. It was in the Union ballroom, an old-timey dance, and it was just great.

The buddy program--do you ever hear of Alan Grundy?

DSG: No...

SPALDING: This was like the campus escort system that you have presently; it was the year before, and Skip and Jay called it then the buddy system. But the only problem there was that everybody was afraid after a while that some of the "buddies" were going to turn out to be rapists, which I think was a legitimate fear, because we had absolutely no control. So that kind of fizzled out; but the Student Services Committee, as always, did the most work--you know, just keeping things going, doing all kinds of little service projects here and there, things like that. A lot of real normal things; nothing really stands out.

.....

DSG: The last constitution's preamble said that one of the purposes of student government was to allow students "participation in the overall policy- and decision-making processes of the University." You had the input on the faculty-student committees, and so forth; but on student-related administrative policy decisions, did you have any kind of input?

SPALDING: You mean a proposed policy change?

DSG: Yes; or were you ever able to initiate any kind of policy changes that would have affected the students?

SPALDING: I just can't remember...I'm thinking of a thousand dealings with different administrators, but that was always in terms of different projects, approvals...

DSG: So you were mostly oriented towards student service.

SPALDING: Service, right.

DSG: What about off-campus affairs? You said you had the Legislative lobby...

SPALDING: That was always wonderful; always. The city lobby committee was less noticeable, because that was a year-'round job. The folks on the State lobby committee always did a marvelous job. We always had a wonderful relationship with a lot of legislators, for two reasons: one was because we were so visible, and we could get media attention immediately; and the second reason was because we were always integral to the Texas Students' Association, and therefore we were picking up vibes from their student constituents. And that work was very strong, for the TSA. You know, Lubbock would contact us if extra pressure needed to be given to their rep, so we would try to find people on campus who were from Lubbock, and back up whatever it was that the students' association at Tech was saying...just try to coordinate efforts, and use the mass populace as much as possible.

DSG: Were you in the NSA at that point?

SPALDING: I attended a meeting in Houston...but the dues for NSA were just overwhelming. It was a good experience attending the NSA meeting, but to me, it didn't justify the several hundred dollars it was going to cost, because the initial outlay wasn't the only part of the picture; you also had to be involved in different things and fly all over the country, and we just didn't have the resources.... I think that, because it was in Houston, I attended to see if we should rejoin, since we had some consistent funding....

So it was predominantly student services...

DSG: In the same vein as Frank Fleming?

SPALDING: Well...

DSG: Not necessarily by the same methods; but he seemed to concentrate his efforts on campus--a shift from, say, Sandy Kress.

SPALDING: To an extent, yes; because it touched the lives of students a lot more concretely than bringing in HEW--which is not a small feat; I'm not at all denegrating him on that--it's just that, in order to help as many people as quickly as possible, in different ways, with the money that we had, we had to show them that we represented them in every way possible. We did what you would call the piddling things; the book sales, the warehouse, garage sales, dances, pizza parties, things

like that--to be visible, to involve as many people as possible; because all of these involved a lot of volunteers, time, contributions, performing, decorating, crap like that. Bringing in HEW, of course, is marvelous--but how many people does that affect? What it does, though, is it grabs the University by its balls; that's no small task.

DSG: Did the Association provide an effective official "voice" for the student body in your view?

SPALDING: I remember one time we tried to poll people; in fact, we had a polling organization...Sara Avant, that was part of Student Services. We tried one, and it just failed miserably. Sara Avant was Phone Poll Subcommittee Chairwoman. We really worked hard on it; it was just for different opinions.... We couldn't get enough student senators to participate; it was real interesting. It's things like that; I mean, here you have the committee people working their butts off, and your senators just, you know, don't have a whole lot of time for it.... Anyway, we tried, and what it required, not only in actual polling, but in tabulating the results--it was absolutely overwhelming, and none of us had access to a computer.... It just didn't work.

DSG: It wasn't technically feasible?

SPALDING: Right. It was not at all that there weren't opinions out there to be gotten.

Each senator was supposed to have office hours and put up a suggestion box; nothing substantive ever came of that. No one ever said, "And this is what I got in my suggestion box today."

DSG: So would you say it was not really the official voice of the students?

SPALDING: Oh, no; we never were. Never while I was there were we: Jay's year, Carol's year....

DSG: What about from the point of view of the average rank-and-file student?

SPALDING: The average rank-and-file student would say, "These folks are taking my money, and they ain't doin' shit, and I want to vote to abolish them." And what I would say in response to that was, "That's fine, but I'm voting first, and I'm voting the exact same way you are," because that's exactly what I did.

DSG: How about from the point of view of the administration?

SPALDING: Well, I think they would react by the classic stalling tactic, so it really wouldn't matter if it was the hacks, the students, or the Students' Association that wanted something. And eventually, if enough students kept at it over a couple of years, I think that they would initiate it, but there were a lot of loopholes for them to get out of.



DSG: What about off-campus?

SPALDING: Off-campus, we had a lot of impact, I think. They had no one else to go to for comments on what the students were thinking, and so forth. And a lot of times I was interviewed, and I would always say, "You cannot say that I am representing all the people on this campus; it just cannot be," and never once saw that printed. I would lobby for the Students' Association, and say, "I am standing here as an individual who is student body president; I'm the only president we have, but I'm not going to stand here and say I represent 42,000 students. It's just not that way." But they'd always interpret it that way. But at any rate, off-campus, since we were the only group that people could come to, I think that we had a lot more impact. On campus, we were just a little fly to be dealt with, as we always were. We were probably a little less to be worried about than Jay's administration was, mainly because they were up to so many different things, and nobody really knew what they were going to pull off next. We were a lot more predictable; a lot more mainstream. Something that I will always regret I think has fizzled out--the Women's Center would be something that I would say with pride to anybody who ever asked, "I started this." We spent four or five years working on it, but we finally got the Women's Center upstairs [in the Union]...we had to go through all kinds of shit with the Union Board...

DSG: What did the Women's Center do?

SPALDING: It was an integral part of campus, just to coordinate the different schools and colleges' programs and bibliographies and projects and lecturers, lending libraries, films--everything imaginable, on campus as well as pooling information from off campus, for women.

DSG: Normally, I ask what was the general attitude of students towards the Students' Association, but...

SPALDING: I think the abolition speaks for itself. You know, if more people had cared, it would have been a higher percentage to vote against. I think that most people really didn't think it could happen; I really think that if they had known that this would be recorded and the regents would follow whatever the students vote, I think the turnout would have been 30,000 to abolish it.

DSG: I had wanted to ask you about the abolition. Of course, we've already talked about it here and there, but.... You had SARC II [the second Students' Association Restructuring Committee], a hand-me-down from Carol, right at the end. What was SARC II...

SPALDING: "Son of SARC..."

DSG: ...and what happened to SARC I?

SPALDING: I think that their proposal was voted down by Jay's Senate,

if I remember correctly; I don't think it was ours. I think that SARC II, Son of SARC, may have been created, or at least was being conceived, at the end of Jay's term. I think that it was fairly clear that the SARC I had lost all of its creativity and credibility. And what was seen and envisioned was that there was a need for using some of the good things about SARC I, but with a new approach. I don't really know; I never was really impressed with them. They don't stick in my mind. These folks sat around every Saturday morning, for months; every meeting that I attended was just a lot of socializing. What they were coming up with, for the amount of time and money they had was just overwhelming. And I don't know what the difference was between SARC I and SARC II; not five years later, I don't.

DSG: So you had a new document presented to the students...

SPALDING: We took that very seriously.

DSG: But didn't the Senate vote that down?

SPALDING: Yeah; but what I'm saying is that Senate meeting, we warned them beforehand, gave them a couple weeks warning; had them come by and read it, discuss it in small groups...it was probably the only time that I was clearly and sincerely impressed with them, because they did take it seriously. We were talking about the cumulative years of work that went into it, and we had maybe a four or five hour Senate meeting to discuss it. When we started it off, I chaired it, because Marc had a lot of feelings on it, and I just mostly wanted to make sure that it ran smoothly, and Marc was not real good at making sure things ran smoothly. We told them beforehand that they were going to have this amount of time, then we'd break it down and go into a clear debate, if that's what we wanted. It really worked very well; and they voted it down. Whatever decision they ultimately reached I think was well thought out, and probably as sincere a representation of the student body as there could have been.

DSG: OK, so then it was set before the students anyway; why was that?

SPALDING: I'm not real sure; I think that at the same time that was going on, there were rumors that there was a plan afoot to abolish. In fact, that may have been why...I might be wrong here, but it may have come up at the same time that the abolition vote was coming up. There were like two or three weeks in a row; every Wednesday there was some kind of vote about the Students' Association--it was really weird. I'm sure the students got sick and tired of it. Anyway, it was in early spring of that year.

DSG: The two votes were held at the same time....

SPALDING: I don't know why it went to the students. I'd like to think that the Senate felt that this was a recommendation to the student body that they were opposed to it, but the students were free to vote on whatever constitution they wanted to. That may really have been why it

was sent to the students.

DSG: So then, the students had several options: they had the option to approve the constitution, they had the option to keep it the way it was, and they had the option to abolish the Association.

SPALDING: And they had the option of putting "none of the above." That was part of every constitution that I could put in, that at every election, they would have the option of putting "none of the above," just because it would give people the chance to say "This is shit, but I want to vote. I want to vote for my student senator, but these folks are fools." Things like that.

DSG: OK...you've got the Committee to Retire Aspiring Politicos (CRAP) in there; you've got the Constructive Abolition Movement working; and the students come to the polls to vote on it. What happened on that day--why was the vote to abolish? What were the students thinking?

SPALDING: That they were not being represented; they were in a position for the first and probably the last time in their lives to vote to abolish a government of any sort. You know, that's a heady experience. We weren't representing them. And I fully mean to encompass everyone who preceded me, certainly for the past few years. We couldn't represent them the way they needed to be represented, or in ways that they would truly benefit from it, because of the structure--the agency status, and all that. Our hands were tied, and other parts of our anatomy, and there was nothing we could do--I mean, the best we could do were the garage sales or the dances, an occasional trot down to lobby the Legislature, appearances--we couldn't do a whole lot.

DSG: You said, "going back a ways." How far back? When was it last effective?

SPALDING: I couldn't even answer that.

DSG: I know it's a pretty subjective question...

SPALDING: I really couldn't answer that; I could only tell you that from the five years that I studied (the paper I wrote), none of them did anything that, I think, had the vote been held at their point in time, that it would have come out any differently than it did on mine. We'll never know; that's just my opinion. But the tradition was, we had a Students' Association run by a bunch of hacks, who could not accomplish what needed to have been accomplished to represent the student body--for whatever reasons, and there were several. Another reason for abolishing was because they could do away with a government for the only time in their lives. Personal dislike for me....

DSG: That came into play?

SPALDING: I would think...I'm sure that there were people who voted against it just to get at me. Now what's funny about all that is that

I was voting to abolish it too, so it didn't hurt me at all. And the whole hope behind it was that there would be somebody or somebodies strong enough--and there were clear indications from people who I'd been working with for several months--to take it off campus, to make it work, to make it fly. And it never did.

DSG: Were a lot of the students aware of that, do you think? It seemed like, from reading the paper, that a lot of people were saying, "Well, we've abolished it. In three weeks or a month or six months, next term, we'll put in a new structure, and everything will be all better," or, "We'll put in a new structure, and everything will be the same as it was before." But "we will put in a new structure," either way; the abolition was only temporary--but five years? Were students voting with the supposition that it was only a temporary thing?

SPALDING: I don't know. Some were, because, as you said, in the Texan there were lots of discussions about "This is only temporary." A lot of people were saying it should never have even been: "Let's never see it again"; and a lot of people were saying, "Let's take it off campus and get control of our own lives for a change." Those other two theories were not very popular in the Texan as you will see, because you never read about them.

DSG: Sandy theorized, from his point of view as president 1973-74: "I think students were faced with a long series of disappointments...we weren't able to do as much on campus as we would have liked to be able to do...then you had Frank Fleming, who was very conservative, and Carol Crabtree, who was more moderate; you had Jay and Skip, who went to the point of anarchy. The students felt like, 'We've tried everything and nothing has worked; let's get rid of it.'" Do you think that was part of it also?

SPALDING: Yes; that's what I'm saying--none of us had truly represented them. None of us. It's not something that I'm proud of; but it was bound to happen sooner or later. And I am convinced it would have happened just as easily sooner as it would five years from now--maybe the last thing you do.

DSG: ....What prospects do you see for the Students' Association now?

SPALDING: Bleak. I haven't told you this: I have a little brother who lives in Moore-Hill now...he's almost as big a hack as I am, and he knows that I particularly would enjoy hearing what's going on at U.T. He said, the other day he read something about elections today, and he just thought, "Well, fuck this!" And I said, "Well, why did you say that, Bill?" And he said, "I don't need to vote for this; it's just going to be more of the same." I said, "Well, Bill, how do you know this?" He said, "Well, it's always the same." And I said, "How many people feel this way, Billy?" And he said, "Oh, everybody at Moore-Hill does!"

I don't know how true that is. But if you don't get off campus, what are you going to solve? You're not going to change the agency

status; you're not going to change anything. Nothing's changed, but the student body has turned over--we've got new hacks and a new constitution now, but what else has changed? You know, they're going to start butting their heads against the University as soon as they come up with a really great project; and then I think it's going to be something like Eureka!, but in a really negative way; it's going to be "NOW I understand why they never got anything done."

DSG: Is there any way to get back to the way it was, say, 25, 30 years ago?

SPALDING: Get off campus now, or else not take on the agency status, and you don't have a choice there.

DSG: If you're on campus, you have the agency status.

SPALDING: If you want to use the facilities, sure; absolutely. There's just no way around that...unless there's something illegal that's going on there, that you have to play by their rules or don't play at all if you're going to be on campus. But other than that, you'd have to get off campus. And that's not the worst thing in the world; it doesn't mean that you're not representative. If anything, I think that would be indicative to the student body that these folks mean business and real representation. And I think they'd be a little less likely to be hacks, because there's more at stake here; it's not instant popularity. So that's how, if you want to get back to 25 years ago--either change the rules of the University, ha ha, or get off campus.

DSG: Five days from now, we're going to elect a new Students' Association president...if he were to come up here next weekend, and sit down with you where I am now, and say "Judy, look back on your experience, on what you've studied, what you know about the Students' Association--what suggestions could you give me..."

SPALDING: Don't do it.

DSG: But he's already in office!

SPALDING: Resign!

DSG: "...what suggestions could you give me to make it work?"

SPALDING: Don't take yourself seriously. Fall in love with somebody, or have your roommate sign a pact with you that says "I will make you feel like shit once a week," just so your ego won't get overwhelmed, because you'll need that.

I don't want to be bitter here. Every time that you open your mouth and criticize people, stop first and think how much of what you are criticizing them for are things that you're guilty of as well. I know I made that mistake a lot.

Having an agenda of three or maybe four projects could probably be the single most radical, revolutionary, and constructive thing you

could possibly do--if you do nothing else but those four things that you set your mind to, then you've been successful.

And don't plan on getting rich.

## PAUL BEGALA

April 5, 1983

*It was an experience in what he humorously, but aptly, termed "microwave government": in four months, Paul Begala had the responsibility for converting the words of the new Students' Association Constitution into a working, functional student government structure. And, perhaps more importantly, many students, skeptical after the initial win of Sam Hurt's Hank the Hallucination, were waiting to be convinced that student government would be responsible, effective, and worthwhile, as its proponents had promised. I asked Paul, as he finished cleaning out his office in the Texas Union on the day after he passed the president's gavel to his successor, to evaluate the performance of the Association in those areas, and to look ahead at its prospects in the future.*

DSG: You ended up building an entire committee structure in only a few months. How well did that work--how efficient was it?

BEGALA: I think it worked real well. We had some overlap, but that's to be expected, because for the committees that I listed on a piece of paper, I had clear notions what each one should do; and then each committee chairman shaped that to his or her idea. So we had, for example, University Policy and Consumer Affairs, which basically coalesced, because they were both so concerned with housing. It wasn't supposed to work that way on paper, but it just happened that way. I think it worked very well, though; I like--I liked, past tense, I guess, now--having 10 committees. Mitch [Kreindler]'s organization is different; he'd rather consolidate them to seven, and that's fine. The reason I liked ten is because you get only a few senators on each committee, and there's no way three or four senators can do all the work of the Consumer Affairs Committee, so they HAVE to get out there; they just have to, or else they look bad.

DSG: And get other students involved.

BEGALA: And try to get other students. I've come to realize that with campus politicoes, the best way to motivate them--and I've tried to use the glowing rhetoric whenever I've been able to, but really, the very best way, the only way, to motivate them--is through their self-interest. So with these committee chairs--and everybody's always running for something, if they're a Student Senator--I tried to make them realize that it was in their best interests politically, and in the Association's best interests professionally, to get non-politicoes involved; and I think that's been a real success.

DSG: We were talking a little bit, before we were on tape, about the student services fee. There were several changes made to the constitution during the summer by the regents, mainly...giving the administration review power. What progress was made towards undoing the changes that were made by the regents, specifically with regard to

fee control and appointments to committees, and so on?

BEGALA: Well, in some areas, it turned out that the changes made by the regents just weren't important, because they really essentially didn't apply.

DSG: How was that?

BEGALA: Well, for example, appointments to University-wide committees. I didn't make any, because they were already made when I came into office, and I didn't want to be in the position of having to displace the students who were already serving on the campus-wide committees. The way it will work now with University-wide appointments, I'm told--Flawn agreed this morning--is that Kreindler will essentially make all the appointments. Flawn is in the position, because of the regents' amendment, of approving them; but I think that Flawn will approve all of Kreindler's appointments.

To answer your question, no progress has really been made in changing the things that we didn't like that the regents put on there. I felt the regents out on various changes, such as one that's particularly onerous to me, the requirement that the president carry 12 hours and have a 2.5 GPA during his term. That excludes a lot of good people; just because their grade-point is low doesn't mean that they couldn't be a good student body president--John Schwartz didn't have the requisite grade-point to run for president, and he's the smartest guy on campus, politically. So, I think that was a bad one, and I felt the regents out about it; specifically, the one I thought would be most sympathetic was Janie Briscoe--and she wanted to hear nothing of it. They want to make sure that these are not "professional students."

DSG: What about with the control of the student services fee?

BEGALA: I've come to realize, since I've worked at the Legislature for the last year and a half before I came here, that the way to get things changed at the University of Texas is not by trying to cajole the regents or to persuade the administration: it's to bypass them. That was the greatest lesson of Sandy Kress' administration--this place is not conducive to change from within, but they are incredibly sensitive to pressure from without, especially from the Legislature. This University is, and it sees itself as, a creation of the Legislature and a child of it. It helps us, as students, to know that the Legislature is only a few hundred yards down the street.

So we've drafted a piece of legislation, one that I worked on last year before I was elected; ...Lloyd Doggett's agreed to carry it, and it's going to get the full weight of his seniority behind it. It essentially gives students as much control over the student services fee as they ever can have under the constitution. That, to me, has been the single most important issue.

DSG: That's where the regents can only override the [allocation] by a two-thirds vote?



BEGALA: The bill as drafted puts parking under the purview of the Student Services Fee Committee, which it is not; it puts the interest off of student money back in the student accounts, where it does not go now.... It also requires the President of the University to meet with the Student Services Fee Committee--and this way, it does not bypass the President: he gets his input at this meeting, and the Fee Committee can accomodate that, if they choose to; and then the President had to transmit the recommendations of the committee to the regents, along with his evaluation of those recommendations. To me, this is the real beauty of the process: it forces the regents to do what the constitution says they're supposed to, and that is to choose, to decide, to manage, and not simply to delegate everything, every final decision, to the presidents of the institutions. Right now, for instance, President Flawn can change anything with just the stroke of his pen--any student recommendation on how their money is spent, and he thinks that's good.

DSG: Does he ever do it?

BEGALA: Oh, yes; absolutely. Last year, I served on the Fee Committee, and he recommended several substantial--sweeping, in some regards--changes in the way student fees are spent. And none of them were changed significantly; I don't have the numbers with me--in fact, the administration is so arrogant, that they didn't even inform the Fee Committee that they made the changes. And in fact, when I pressed, before it went to the regents, to get a copy of it, they said, "No, that's sacrosanct; you can't see it." And the reasons I was given, by a couple of top administrative officials, was "the regents don't want to be backed into a corner and railroaded." That translates to, "The regents don't want to be put in the position of making a decision between the students and the administration." Well, if they didn't want that, they shouldn't have been a regent; they should have declined the appointment. So that is our position; I want to put the regents on the line. I think it's good to put them on the spot.

DSG: Do you think that the regents will tend to make changes in the allocation?

BEGALA: I think the regents are going to be inclined to go with the president of the institution; I don't have any illusions about that. I've been told many times when I've met with the regents informally to try to get them to change things that Flawn had done: "Well, that's Pete's campus now, and we can't screw it around"--they're real sensitive to being viewed as a meddler, or a Frank Erwin. Flawn, this morning, tried to accuse me of getting the regents back into the process, trying to get them to meddle on campus, and I'm not doing that; but I want them to be the final decision-making authority. So a lot of times, they are going to go with Flawn, but we get out of it is a public hearing; and the regents are political animals. The president of the University is not, in the sense of statewide politics...; but the regents have to be concerned with the way they look on a statewide basis, because there hasn't been a regent on the Board that hasn't wanted to be reappointed, and the governor watches those things real closely.

So what we want to do is make it damn hard for the regents to say, "Well, we're going to go against the students." It's just real fundamental to me; it's just the same as 1774, the same as taxation without representation. And I guarantee that's something you're going to hear more and more as the bill comes up--we're considering a "U-Tea Party"; we're not sure how, but we're going to have our own Tea Party, a University Tea Party....

DSG: You could throw it in Littlefield Fountain...

BEGALA: We may do that; we may throw bags of tea into Littlefield Fountain and get arrested [laughing]. I'm seriously considering that.

DSG: How well did the members of the Senate work together in this last four months? They didn't really have much time to become a unified body; how well did it work?

BEGALA: I was just stunned. I am anti-Greek, period, for the record--my brother is a Greek, my father was in a frat, "some of my best friends are Greeks"--I'm anti-Greek at the University of Texas because they are racist. I don't care if they're elitist; that doesn't bother me; but they are racist. And that bothers me so much, because we have a history of being racist. So I walked into this office with this tremendous anti-Greek prejudice; but it was a Greek-dominated Senate, and I have been overwhelmed at the way they've worked together, for the most part. We had too many senators who just dropped out of the process, and have not done very much at all--far too many.

DSG: They stopped coming to meetings?

BEGALA: Well, they came to Senate meetings; they'd have to, or else they'd get kicked out. But they just didn't do anything; they did the minimum to stay a Student Senator, and that was a real shame. But we had some people--it was funny; towards the end, people were calling them "Begala's clique," or something, and most of them I'd never met before--they were the ones who were here every day, many of them were Greek. One of the co-sponsors of our Minority Representation Act, which was probably one of the most significant pieces of student legislation which has come up, was Greek...and realizes that there are some social injustices that you can correct. So I've been real impressed with the way they worked together. It helped a whole lot that we took a retreat; we took a weekend, and Flawn sprung for it--I'll admit it, it was not student money; it was extra money he has from the vending machines, or something--and we spent \$4,000. We went down to Wimberly, and stayed on the ranch; that was a tremendous asset, because we didn't have the time to eventually work out group dynamics and get to know each other; we had to know each other right away. It was sort of "microwave government" here--we tried to get as much done in as short a time as possible, and I think it worked. The retreat was probably a big part of it. Gonzalo Barrientos gave us about seven cases of beer, too--to grease the wheels while we were down there.

DSG: How would you evaluate the degree to which the Students' Association represented the student body as a whole, judging on voter turnout and whatever else you think might be a good measure?

BEGALA: Well, I think voter turnout has been and probably will continue to be abysmal and embarrassing. But it is on a statewide and international basis...

DSG: But not as bad.

BEGALA: Not as bad, certainly. I think a lot of it is because students aren't aware of what we're doing; I pointed that out last night in my speech--we need to make them aware. We need to bring up issues that they have a stake in, and to me the most salient issue is student fees, and I hope that the other students will agree with that. But if they don't, there's plenty of other things that, if you publicize them enough and let people know, I think the average student will latch on to one or two of these things, whether it's TA and AI salaries, or East Austin expansion, or minority rights or women's rights, or rape prevention, book exchanges, housing...whatever. So I think that we have not gotten enough people to participate, yet, in the voting process; but I think we represent very well. Sometimes it's tough, because as the year's gone on, I've become very friendly with Ron Brown, and very antagonistic with Charles Franklin and Bob Mettlen, who are the two most arrogant administrators that we have. But it turns out that these are nice people, and this is all a very subtle cooptation process; and this is one of the reasons that I think it's good that I'm getting out and Kreindler's coming in--because it's hard, once you've seen Flawn out of his element, and realized he's really not a fearsome, nasty person with horns; and you've met his wife, and you've chatted--it's hard then, to stand up like I did last night, and say that what he's doing is wrong. And they do that deliberately. You know, it's nice to be able to go to cocktail parties with the governor, and then after that it's hard to criticize them. But, I think that we've been...real good about continually questioning them, continually pricking at the administration, because I really do believe that this University has little or no conscience, and that the conscience has to come from the student body.

DSG: How well did the senators stay in contact with their constituents?

BEGALA: I don't really know. To different degrees; some not at all. But those who were elected specifically, say, at-large, because of the Greek population, I think they've probably stayed in real close touch, because they live with those people, they party with them...somebody's going to bump into them at the house or at a street party and say, "You're a Student Senator; what are you doing about my issue?" .... I think those who were elected specifically from, say, Liberal Arts, have had an easier time, being from the colleges, because they have the [college] council setup, and they've been real good about that. Well, I think they've been good about it; the graduate students have been better than the undergraduates.

DSG: I'm curious about the interrelationships between the Students' Association and some of the other power groups on campus--TSP, Union Board, Senior Cabinet, and to a lesser degree, the college councils. Did you sit on the Union Board and TSP?

BEGALA: Oh, yes; both.

DSG: As chairman?

BEGALA: No; I was a member.

DSG: It used to be under the constitution that the president or his representative--usually, he did it--was president of both the Union Board and the TSP Board.

BEGALA: I like that a lot better. And not just because I have a lust for power, because my terms on both those boards are over.

DSG: What I was wondering about was, as I believe you mentioned last night, Senior Cabinet was created by the regents, perhaps not in a conscious effort to undermine the student government, but certainly to look for a responsible student voice where there didn't seem to be one in the Association--which had the effect of undermining student government; and you mentioned that you worked very well with Julie Tindall, and so forth.

BEGALA: Sure. Julie's been Chair [of Senior Cabinet] for two years; she's the one who talked me into running for this office, and for every office I've ever run for; she's been an older sister and mentor. So it's hard for me to divorce the Senior Cabinet from Julie, but when I try to do that, I still think that the Senior Cabinet and the Students' Association will continue to work together--they have to. What we need to keep pushing is that we have common interests that far outweigh any of the petty squabbling we might have, whether it's over fees, or "turf," or whatever. A good case is the Student Guide To Courses and Instructors, which student government used to publish and, in our absence, Senior Cabinet published--what do we do now? That had a potential to be a tremendously bitter turf fight; but I sat down with Tindall and said, "Let's co-publish it...." And that commitment's there; I'll be gone next year and Julie will be gone next year, but Kreindler and Julie Tindall's successor I think will be bound by that precedent.

DSG: Do you think there's really a need for Senior Cabinet?

BEGALA: I do; I really do. I was on a college council, and I was an officer of it. The need for Senior Cabinet is so that the college councils can coordinate. We've got to have college councils, because they've developed into largely hopefully apolitical, programming type entities; that's really helpful; I think that's really good--you need academic programming on campus. It's an important part of your education.

DSG: One of the people that I talked to suggested that Senior Cabinet be brought in as a committee of student government.

BEGALA: Be subsumed into student government? That ultimately might be a good idea.

DSG: It would still perform the same functions, but it would be under the control or jurisdiction, whichever term you prefer, of student government.

BEGALA: Yeah; that might ultimately be a good idea. I certainly wouldn't push for it, though, because the way it works out practically is that they are essentially under our jurisdiction, under our purview, because the Students' Association runs the Fee Committee, and the Fee Committee gives the money to Senior Cabinet. So that might be unnecessary.

The Texan, which I thought, way before I ever thought of running, I thought, "If student government comes back, you're going to see an incredible power struggle between the student body president and the editor of the Texan." But that hasn't been, not only because Lisa [Beyer] and I are close, but also because the Texan has been crusading alone for all these issues; and it turns out the Texan will be glad to turn over a lot of that responsibility to student government. I think the only problem with a power group on campus has been with the Union; I think that because so many Union Board members were never elected--they were appointed by Flawn, especially Mollie Crosby, the chairman--they have an absolute contempt for student government and the democratic process. I think it would be a very good thing to start getting people who are accountable on that Union Board. It's just a classic example: the Board members who were elected...I don't always agree with what they do, but they are responsible. I swear to God, in those meetings, they always say, "But won't this hurt the students?" All I ever hear from Mollie Crosby and Tom Forester, who were appointed by Flawn, is "Well, the regents think this," and "The administration would like that." Just a wonderful contrast to sit in those meetings, and see that Board.

DSG: The Association will elect people who will be appointed to those spots.

BEGALA: Yes. The day of the administration-appointed Union clone is over; I think those people are dinosaurs, and they've done a disservice to us. That's one of the good things about the Union coming back, is that the Union will be run more democratically.

DSG: You had mentioned a little bit about your relationship with the regents and the administration; anything else you wanted to add about that? You said the best way with the regents was to go over their heads.

BEGALA: Yes...

DSG: But were you ever able to get anything done on a one-to-one basis with the regents, or with the administration?

BEGALA: Some; some. With the administration, certainly; I had weekly meetings with Brown, the Vice-President for Student Affairs. And really, that was just feeling each other out, at first, and then it was alerting each other. We had this unwritten, unspoken agreement that if Brown knew something--and Brown knows everything that's happening in this administration--and I needed to know that, he'd let me know. And I tried to do the same thing with him, in a fair way; I certainly wouldn't tell any secrets or spill any beans, or tip him off to any of the things we were doing against the administration, nor did he do that when the administration did something against the students. We made some progress there....

With the regents? I never once spoke at a regents' meeting, and I went to every one; I am bored with the regents.

DSG: You didn't speak by your choice, or because they wouldn't let you...?

BEGALA: No; my choice. Had I wanted to, I'm sure they would have let me. I had nothing to say to them. I did meet with many of them privately, and those meetings are wonderful for that; you can just grab them, especially the one who's most accessible to students, Howard Richards. He lives in Austin...and is a very friendly man. He's not a very good regent, though, and I say that because, while he's very friendly and he's open to students and wants to meet with students, that's all nice--but what it comes right down to is no one will vote with students. That's just a personal observation....

DSG: How much input did you have, if any, on administrative policy decisions--anything besides the student services fee that might have come up during the year that was student-related? For instance, although this was only remotely student-related, expansion into East Austin. The resolutions that you would pass expressing opinions on administrative actions--did they do any good?

BEGALA: Yes. I think so; I think they did a tremendous amount of good. They didn't change anything--you know, Flawn didn't wake up and read the Texan and say, "Good GOD! Begala's against going into East Austin. Stop the bulldozers!" But it did some good, because they knew, in our first term--I'm sure they thought in our first term we were going to spend our time on creating [comment] boxes and posters and moving furniture; and it took a long time to do that shit--but I think it kind of knocked them off balance. Right out of the box, we started attacking the administration for the bad things that they were doing, especially in East Austin. It put them on the defensive; it made them question; it made them look BAD. And the University is very susceptible to publicity--very susceptible. It's one thing for the people who are moved out of their houses to say, "Oh, well...they can easily be dismissed; of course they don't like it, but the Greater Public Good

says we should do it." But when the students in the University, the people who are supposed to benefit from that move, stand up and say, "This is crap," I think it helps, and it's going to make the University temper the way they do that in the future. And we really believe that; we've talked to some administrators about it.

So they don't call me up and say, "Paul, we're going to buy a thousand acres of East Austin; how do you feel about it?" Which I'd love for them to do, but they won't. Still, the ex post facto criticism, if done responsibly and intelligently--and I think it has been--is a real good vehicle for changing the way the administration thinks.

DSG: How would you describe your relationship with the administration?

BEGALA: I am convinced after this morning that it is based on mutual respect. It is stormy; I guess that's the best word.

DSG: But not antagonistic.

BEGALA: No; not antagonistic--we get along. Some of them are antagonistic; Charles Franklin is obnoxious, and Bob Mettlen is contemptuous, and arrogant. But Brown and Flawn, when you finally get through all the coarseness on the outside, they're friendly, engaging; Flawn is tremendously intelligent, just wonderfully intelligent. And I think he's a good president; he's a good vision for the University, except students--he's so corporate. He said several times that he would not agree to any of the things in our bill; he would not discuss a compromise on student fees. And he kept saying, "I give you the management position"; it's so telling that he uses "management," and I guess that makes US "labor." That's bullshit.

I kept saying this, and he kept saying, "Well, do YOU want to run the University? Do you want to have responsibility for this?" And I said, "No, that's what we hire administrators for." His University and mine are different in that regard; but as an educational institution, I think he's moving us in the right direction.

DSG: How effective was the Association off-campus, as far as the Texas Student Lobby, and anything that you may have had more far-reaching than that?

BEGALA: I think we've had a lot more pull with the Legislature than we've had with the average student; that's real telling. We've done good things on campus, but we've done much better at the Legislature. And most people don't even know about it. For example, student fee legislation: it's only been discussed for the last week or two, and it finally came out in the newspaper. That was deliberate; we kept it under wraps. We thought if we downplayed it and tried to sneak it through, then UT wouldn't pull out the big guns on it. In a little while, UT caught it, and they're pulling out the big guns, so now it's public. But I think we've been far more successful at the Legislature than we've been on campus, and a tremendous amount of credit for that goes to Doggett, who is now eighth in seniority; he's been there ten years; and he's the single most dynamic personality in the Capitol

Building. And he has thrown his full weight behind this...because it's the same things he's been fighting for. So that's been a great asset. It's been a great asset to have Oscar Mauzy on our side; his daughter's one of our student lobbyists; and Jesse Oliver, who used to be involved in the Texas Student Lobby.

DSG: Has the TSL had more impact now that it's under the Association than it did in the last few years?

BEGALA: Yes, oh yes. We've had a lot of people in previous sessions who would dismiss them and say, "Well, they're energetic and they're bright, but they're just four people." And they were right. Now they're 48,000, and cannot be denied. So it's...done a tremendous job. We've got legislation introduced--and it won't all pass--but we've got legislation introduced to strengthen the rights of student tenants, to protect us from losing our property deposits; you know, the Texas Association of Realtors is going to crush that dead; they're going to stomp it....but it's good to keep them on the defensive--to make them kill a good bill, so they can't spend all their time passing bad bills. There's a tremendous amount you can accomplish in the negative; unfortunately, with progressive causes in this state, that's half the battle.

We're also pushing for a student regent; that's a perennial thing that Mauzy's carrying. That's not of personal importance to me; it's just not. I think that it's in a sense almost tokenism. It's an important symbol and token. We are pushing our student fee legislation; we are going to beat a tuition increase--[Governor] Mark White has promised me in private that he will veto a tuition increase bill, and we've been spreading that over every paper in the state; we're going to beat the drinking age bill--we're going to do it, and I think that's really exciting.

DSG: I've asked you already how well you thought the Association represented the students. I'm going to ask you to turn it around now: the Association is supposed to be the official "voice" of the student body; how well do you think it filled that role, if you take it from the point of view of the average student?

BEGALA: I still think, very well. I think the average student probably has some distaste or resentment for student government, because they might perceive us as just being campus politicoes. I am convinced that if you sat the average student down in a room with Flawn, that student would want to know why he or she does not have control of student fees; if he or she were to go down to the Legislature, that student would be there to testify against the tuition increase, or against the drinking age increase. Honestly, I swear to God, I feel that so strongly when I stand up there and testify--that it's not just me; it really isn't; I damn well know in my heart that any student that you drag off the street would say the same things.... We ran a comprehensive survey of student opinion on just a huge variety of issues, and that's been a real good guide. We have followed it, essentially, but not by design; it just happens that my conscience and the conscience of most of the Student Senators is the same as the conscience of the vast



majority of students....

I think we've done a very, very good job of addressing the things that the average student would address if he or she had the resources, and the credibility to get on the nightly news.

DSG: Did the administration see the Association as the official "voice" of the student body; or did they see it as a group of campus politicoes who are out to do what they think is right?

BEGALA: Well, at first, there were a few comments from some administrators about, "Uh-oh, Hank got more votes than you did, Paul"; but that's been abandoned. It really has been; and a large amount of credit for that goes to Lisa Beyer for making the issues that are student government's issues also the Texan's issues, and the average student's issues. So at first, they were very quick to put us down that way; but not now. Those comments have stopped, because we have marshalled student support for these important issues. The best example is on the drinking age bill--we're going to have 2000 students overflowing the House chambers. We're going to have rallies...and then we're going to take that momentum and ship it into student fees. They'll see. I think they do now.

DSG: If you had to look back on your administration, short though it was, what would you pick out as the single greatest accomplishment of the Begala Administration? What mark did you leave?

BEGALA: That's a really hard question. I haven't had any time to reflect. But--this is so intangible, but--I think direction. We had none. We were also amorphous; we had no structure. That was nice. I think virtually anybody with common sense would have come in and set up the same structure that I did; I don't take any special credit for that; I don't think it was particularly wonderful, but it was good. But I think direction is the thing that we most desperately needed, and I think in the long run, that will be the thing that I'll leave behind, more than anything else.

I hope I've left a certain energy and a certain style and a certain vigor; but I know I've left a certain direction. I think it has been so crucial--I've been pushing this all year, at every Senate meeting--not to get bogged down in the internal matters; not to make student government's only job to allocate fees on campus, or to fight over whether or not the president should get a large salary, or to draw up bylaws and constitutions and committees. That's all kind of crap. But we've moved in some real solid directions.

The one project I'm most proud of is the SURE [Students United for Rape Elimination] program; I just feel like a papa; I mean, that was my idea. I made it a campaign issue, and I read about it in Ms. magazine--Stanford set up a program like this--and from there, it now breathes, it lives, it does good. So that's my favorite project; but still, that falls under direction.

We've moved into a direction that's progressive and aggressive, in terms of women's rights, minority rights, student rights; and I think that that direction will continue to be followed. When student government

starts to collapse is when it becomes completely introspective and self-serving, and that is what I've tried to avoid the most. The way to avoid that, to me, is to set us on a real clear, long-term course towards aggressively, vigorously advocating student rights, whether it be student fees this year, or closing down the hospital next year because all they ever do is operate on football players anyway--they perform ten operations a year. It's a philosophy of direction and energy. That's so intangible, but I still think it's been very, very valuable.

DSG: Would you say that's the way to keep the Students' Association from being abolished again? Some people have said that it's living on borrowed time, and sooner or later it's going to start making mistakes, and then it's going to snowball and be abolished.

BEGALA: Yeah; I think the way to keep it from being abolished is to keep it aggressive, keep it public, keep it relevant to the average student. I think it's nice when you have some people who are at either end of the spectrum--like real freak-looking type hippie-'60s leftovers who come up to me on the West Mall, or in a bar or something, and say, "Give 'em hell! Just really go after them; you can't give up." And then, on the other side, I've had some of even the real conservative students, I've got friends who've worked for the NRA, who feel the same way about student issues. So that, to me, is the way: to unify students in the things that we hold common. It's something of an understatement, but not too much, to say that we are something of an oppressed people--we are the constituency of the University who is most easily ignored. The faculty, I think, is taken much more seriously than we are. And I think we need to turn things around completely. I just took down a quote that I've had above my typewriter all year...from the professor who was the first president of the general faculty. In 1883, at the laying of the cornerstone of Old Main, 100 years ago, he gave this beautiful speech...in which he says: "We frequently hear the phrase, 'coming to the University,' forgetting that you ARE the University. More than the Board of Regents, more than the faculty, more than the administration, you students ARE the University." And I just think that's so crucial; that has been the direction that I've been following all along. As long as we keep following that, and don't become introspective and incestuous and self-serving, the students will continue to see it as a good thing.

DSG: In my study, I've found that student government has fulfilled many different roles: serving the students on campus, serving the students off-campus in lobbying, a voice in national issues, whether it be the voice of the students or just the Student Assembly...many other things. In the next ten or twenty years, what should the role of the Students' Association be?

BEGALA: Well, I think we should keep moving in the direction that we're moving in. On campus, you've got to provide those basic services; we have an obligation to do that--to keep women from having

their lives ruined by being raped on campus, etc. We have an obligation to provide basic consumer services to students--book exchanges, and so on. We've got to keep those on campus programs growing and continuing. We have to continue off-campus advocacy; that has so far been on a city and state level; I want, ultimately, to move to the national level. It just has to; there's absolutely no reason why we should stand idly by and watch Ronald Reagan destroy modern education in America.... We passed at least one international resolution--we adopted a Soviet Jew.... He's been expelled from Moscow State University because he's Jewish and his parents want to emigrate to Israel; because of that, he's been denied an education; we've adopted him as a UT student.... That was the only thing we've worked on way out of our normal pond, but I'd like to see us do a lot more of that. We've taken a stand with most other major universities and established Peace Day, which will be in the next couple of weeks, but we haven't planned any particular program for it or anything.

But we have stood by silently while Reagan has dismantled 35 years of bipartisan commitment to quality education.... We need to take a stand on those sorts of things. We need to take a stand on nuclear weapons and the nuclear freeze. That's the ultimate issue.

DSG: You think that's the proper role for student government?

BEGALA: Absolutely. Absolutely. We are the conscience of the University.

DSG: But are you representing the students in that kind of role?

BEGALA: I think so. You know, the average student doesn't want to be blown away in a nuclear holocaust.

DSG: But not everyone has the same views on the merits of nuclear weaponry.

BEGALA: Certainly. That's why we need to bring it up; make it an issue. That ought to be something that people are running on. We shouldn't ignore it, is what I'm saying. We should be speaking out. And if the preponderance of the student body says that we speaking out against a nuclear freeze and for greater armament, or for dismantling of public education, then we ought to speak out on that, and aggressively. We can find out; this is a tremendous forum. People will come to Student Senate meetings if it's an issue that concerns them; we've packed that room more than once with people. And when that happens, the floor is open to any student who wants to say that we're full of shit, or we're doing a good job. So yeah, it's important that we bring up these tough and controversial issues, and get people involved. If they have a student body president who is up there making pronouncements that they disagree with, and they didn't vote for him, you can be goddamn sure they're going to vote the next time. I think that's a good thing.

DSG: Last question: I know you've sat down with Mitch and given him

some pointers about the office. What's the single most important piece of advice that you would give Mitch and those who succeed him, and you, as president, to help them do a good job and make the Association stay a viable organization?

BEGALA: -Again, I think that so much of it is intangible; that student government's success or failure on a year-to-year basis to me is hinged on the quality of leadership and the personality behind that leadership. So I would urge anybody who had this office to be as aggressive as possible, to be as outspoken as possible; I hate to sound like Churchill, but "Neyer, never give up." Don't ever! There's no need to become cynical; I'm not in the least bitter or cynical. Sure, the bad guys win some, but we win some too. There's no need to throw your hands up and say, "Well, fuck it; I can never change this University," because they can, and they will. It's been done in the past; greater mountains have been toppled. So I really think it's just absolutely essential that everybody who succeeds me--and I'm certainly just following in other people's footsteps in this regard, especially Kress and Doggett--be as aggressive and outspoken as possible, and that they just continue to question. That just lies at the heart of not only student government, but also of the University experience.

## MITCH KREINDLER

April 5, 1983

Minutes after I concluded my interview with Paul Begala, incoming Students' Association President Mitch Kreindler entered his new office for the first time, and invited me in. Obviously elated, he rocked back and forth in his chair a few times, looked through his desk and discovered the combination to the Association safebox, which he immediately tried (it worked), and then only slightly hesitatingly answered his phone--"Students' Association, uh...may I help you?"

Kreindler comes into the office of president from outside the student government--he was a member and past president of the College of Business Administration Council--and his views and ideas for the Students' Association are new, fresh, creative, and, as he described them, "program-oriented." He told me about some of those plans for the coming year, and his long-range hopes for the UT student government process.

DSG: Do you anticipate making any changes to the governmental structure? I know you started out with some of the committees last night....

KREINDLER: The changes that were made last night in the committees were really not changes in the current structure, because the current structure has ten committees. The structure in the bylaws, accepted by the outgoing Senate, had 11 committees, and we just revamped it to seven. In other words, we never even functioned under that structure. I don't see any kind of major changes at all; I think the seven-committee structure will be a real good way to operate. I think that seven people in charge, with a lot of very strong sub-committee chairs--the only difference might be in the role of the sub-committee chairs, for instance: the SURE program was put under Student Services, and it used to be a committee chair. Meg Brooks wants to call it "Director of the SURE program," which is fine too. As far as I'm concerned, there is still a SURE committee; it may be a sub-committee under Student Services Committee, but as far as them saying, "Who are we?", they are the SURE committee. Same thing with Legislative Affairs; it was molded into the Citizen's Affairs Committee. There can still be a Texas Student Lobby, and there can still be a Legislative Affairs Committee; they are SUB-committees, but you don't have to call them that, because that just creates bureaucratese that everybody in the world wants to pick up on and yell at. So really the only...changes in the structure I can see would be a strengthening of the sub-committee chair roles by creating some of these larger positions.

DSG: Any other changes that you plan, constitutional amendments or anything like that, that you see coming up?

KREINDLER: I don't see any major changes; maybe some things in the bylaws. The only change that could possibly come up, and obviously will, will be the Minority Representation Act.

DSG: How do you feel about that?

KREINDLER: I see arguments on both sides. There's one argument that says we shouldn't be giving minorities a special seat and giving them special treatment; some of the minority students themselves are saying, "Don't treat us differently. Let some Black students run; let some Hispanic students run--when they lose, and if it's obvious that they lost because they're minorities, THEN give us a seat; use affirmative action to say, 'Hey, we need the seat.'" The argument that I'm subscribing to, and I do support it, is that minority students on this campus are not involved in the student government, they're not involved in mainstream organizations. And the only ones who are involved are those Black students--and this is a generalization, I'll caution that--who are not mainstream Black community, because it is a very, very clique-ish community. I'm not saying we need to break up the clique; but we need to involve them and give them a reason to be involved. I think that by electing a senator from those groups, that would help tremendously; and although the argument says you don't give someone something for nothing, I think at the same time, anything that we can do at this University that's a small gesture at helping get people active, I think would be very, very worthwhile idea. We have a Minority Affairs Committee now, and there's a lot of things they can do with recruiting and retention.... The idea is, let's have a committee to draw those people into the process....

DSG: What are your plans as far as on-campus, for the next year?

KREINDLER: Two programs that were passed by the outgoing Senate... were a textbook exchange and the recycling drive for the Texan. That is something that used to be done, and has fallen by the wayside since. Not only would the recycling drive have, obviously, and environmental impact, but at the same time it might generate us a little revenue on the side that we could use to defer costs in that program. The textbook exchange is a tremendous idea; in its infancy, I'm not sure it will be that far reaching, to thousands and thousands of students, immediately....

Other ideas, things I want to continue, are things like the SURE program, which is a tremendous idea--having a walking escort service. There are other things I'd like to see. I think the Students' Association needs to put itself in front of the students on a weekly basis. We need to say, "Here we are; here's the programs we're having," and I don't know if that needs to take the form of a lunch with the president, meaning myself; a lunch with some of the Student Senators, having a couple of the committee chairs sit down and say, "Here's what we're doing; can we answer your questions?" I think that's one form it needs to take; that's one way of getting back to the students and saying, we're here for you, come talk to us. At the same time, I would like to see us start what I'm going to call a Distinguished Lecturer Series. Obviously, it doesn't have any impact as far as changing policy here at the University; but I think there's a tremendous pool of talent here at UT--people like Steven Weinberg, John Wheeler, different people in the Humanities, and Business, who are

these tremendous names across the nation--and most people don't even know they're here.... What I'd like to see done is, once a week, have some sort of a lunch, where they just come very informally for a brown-bag seminar, and just address students and talk about some of the things they're doing. I find it fascinating, not necessarily that John Wheeler was the one who developed the Black Hole theory, but what is he doing now? What is he looking into now? I think other students might be fascinated with that kind of thing also.... It might also be nice if, once a semester, we could bring in a big-name speaker.... The problem is, I don't want to step on the toes of the other committees on campus; but I think that, especially with University speakers, it's a void that's not being filled right now....

On other programs, I don't really have specifics for you. There's a good deal we could do with recruitment and retention, working with the admissions office.... I think we need to make a big push with orientation. Unfortunately, on this campus, there's a large apathy towards student government, and I'm well aware of that. When I go out to the public and say I represent 46,000 students, technically, I do; but in practicality, if you asked all 46,000 students, the majority would probably say no, I don't. That's something we need to change; we need to get their voice heard; those students need to be absorbed into the process, and I think things like surveys--you know, what do students think? I think that one of the problems with the SURE program, and it's something that I was yelling about all through the first half of the Students' Association, and that I was fought on vehemently; but I've been proven wrong. I really felt that you need--well...who's going to say, "Let's not prevent rape"? It's a great idea. The problem with it in my mind, was: do students WANT it? Was it something that was going to be used? I don't think anybody stopped to ask. I think that a few phone calls, a couple hundred surveys, would have determined that rather quickly. I think that kind of research needs to be done a little more in depth.

I don't have any other specific programs, but I do want to see them move towards programming. We cannot push paper, and one of the ideas of the committee restructure was to take committees like the housing committee, which is going to put out a housing guide....

DSG: The Students' Association here used to do that...

KREINDLER: I find out all this information--that's why I want to read your book.

DSG: Book!?! [groan...]

KREINDLER: The other thing is that the Housing Committee was a one-project committee; that was their job, to put out the housing guide. The SURE committee is a one-project committee. For those reasons, they were brought under other committees, so that something like Student Services, which is mandated to work with student services fees, is not pushing paper only.... This says, "Here's what this committee is doing for students; we're not just pushing paper...." My personal thrust, and I come from a programming background--you know,

Paul is from a legislative background; he's worked in the Capitol with different senators, and he has a very fine-tuned legislative background. Mine is not. Mine comes from college councils, where the whole thrust is programming, not issue-oriented. So I'm not saying that we're going to get away from issues, because I think we need to deal with them; but I think we can develop some programs, and not just for the sake of programs, but to develop some programs that will be of value to students, and something that they can see: "Look at all the Students' Association is doing!" Right now, they're paying what comes down to fifty or sixty cents a semester for student government, and I think if a student can say, "Look! I'm saving five bucks on this textbook because I used the book exchange," he'd be more than willing to pay that sixty cents. That's the kind of thing we need to show them: that their money is being well-spent, which is something they're not seeing now.

DSG: What about your plans for off-campus?

KREINDLER: A big off-campus activity this semester has been the Legislature, and will continue to be for the next couple of months. I wish they were going to stay in session, because that's one area where I do not have a lot of expertise, and I'd like to learn a lot more.... Right now, I want to work toward the landlord-housing laws that are going through; and especially, the student-service fee bill. The administration has come up with their own version, which they call a compromise; basically, as far as we're concerned, it's a starting point. They've said it's their final compromise, so it's a problem of reconciliation. The drinking age, which is coming up in hearing tomorrow--that is something we've got to pursue, and make sure it does not pass....

As far as other activities, I think we can do more with the City Council...; a lot of landlord-housing things may be looked at there. Something that's University related...is the...East Austin expansion; I honestly believe that those people have been robbed.... There's got to be a mechanism, and apparently it's going to have to be written into law, that this University abides by some sort of humanitarian policy in relocating these people. Granted, it's only a very small minority of people, but that doesn't mean that they weren't pushed out or forced out. It's not the nicest neighborhood in the world; it's a very low-income neighborhood, and I really do not understand where those people are going to go.

Other off-campus things: there's been some talk about doing some leadership training, working with the Austin high schools, and that could almost be a recruiting thing...--it shows these people what UT's doing, and it's really a neat program, and you want to get involved with it.... It's not a hard sell; it's a very soft sell....

I don't see us addressing problems like El Salvador; I do not see us addressing nuclear freeze resolutions. Now the reason I don't see it at this point is because it's not a national movement. I think that in the past, the Association had its problems in dealing with problems that were not campus-related.



DSG: Past Paul, or farther back?

KREINDLER: Prior to abolition. And I think we need to say to the students on this campus, and ourselves, "We are here to serve the campus and the students." Yes, we're not going to close our eyes to the rest of the world, but let's deal with things we can have an impact on. You know, firing a paper resolution at the nuclear freeze doesn't really do anything; it doesn't have any impact. Now, organizing a rally to support nuclear freeze--something that's physical--that could probably come up for debate. But I don't think we need to just fire off resolutions--get out of El Salvador; divest from South Africa--unless we're prepared to do things to support those activities. I think too often, in societies such as our own, legislative bodies just like to fire off resolutions, because it's something they can show to the home folks, and say, "Look what we did." So unless we're prepared to take a program and to move on it, I don't think we should do anything. A good example is the East Austin expansion: a resolution was passed basically condemning the actions of the University, and supporting the rights of the people there; and we have since contacted the neighborhood association and worked with them to try to come up with some sort of solution.

An exception, and this is something everybody talks about, was Viet Nam, and the reason that hit close to home was that so many people were leaving to go to war.... That's the kind of movement I can see us getting involved in. I don't see us starting national movements--regardless of how people think about the nuclear freeze, I just don't think it's an issue we need to deal with, especially in our infancy. I think it's important that we play isolationist. It's something that you can see in American history that the United States did very well: you develop your own structure, and then when you're powerful enough internally, you can go ahead and go outside. But you can't do that before the inside is strong.

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DSG: What degree of influence, or participation, will you try to have in policy-making on the University administrative level?

KREINDLER: One of the things that annoys me the most, and one of the things we need to get a hold of, is that we need to get involved in the University's flow of information. The biggest accomplishment that I can achieve in the next year is to get this government some credibility. Now I don't know how to measure that credibility; it might be in how many people show up for student government elections next year.... One thing with the administration, though, is that they need to start looking at us as the representatives of the students. For instance: there is a commencement ceremony coming up, and Julie Tindall is speaking, as chairman of the Senior Cabinet. Now, I love Julie, and she's done a lot on this campus, and she's very deserving of the honor. My personal feeling, though, is that if they're having representatives of the ex-students, students, faculty, and the Board of Regents, then you want the person who represents those organizations, for instance, someone from the Students' Association. I don't care if they ask Paul Begala to do it; I'm not interested in being up there

giving that speech. But I still think the Students' Association is the proper one to give it. They will allow me, however, to sit on the stage, and that's just saying, "Oh, yeah, we know that you're there; why don't you just kind of stand second in line." That bothers me. A lot.

We need to get involved in the information flow. When they circulate a report or a memo that has anything to do in any possible way in something we'd be interested in, we should get a copy of it. You know, the UT bureaucracy sends out thousands of copies every time they send a letter; there's no reason why one of those can't be "Students' Association Office." And that is something that I need to sit down and talk about with Dr. Brown and Dr. Flawn...and the same thing with them: when I send out a memorandum which has anything to do with this University that they might be concerned with, I'm more than willing to give them a copy.

DSG: It used to be that way.

KREINDLER: Yes; and I'd like to get a very open system. The problem is that it's not there now, and it's real hard to get the bureaucratic wheels turning in a different direction, much less turning at all.

DSG: Once you have that information flow, what kind of influence will you try to have?

KREINDLER: As far as the policy-making goes, a lot of times we're not playing with the same deck. They want to tell us one thing, and we want to tell them something, and we're not dealing with the same information. The way we can affect policy, more than anything else, is--right now, we have an adversarial role. They say, "Here's a policy," and we say, "No! That's bad! Let's change it." And that's just a rotten way to go about things. It would be a lot nicer, and probably a lot more palatable to both sides, if they could say, "We're thinking of this policy; what do you think?" And seriously listen to us, and hear what we're saying.... I don't see us going to the Texan to change policy; I don't see holding rallies on the West Mall to change policy--although I'm not above either. I do see a lot of talking, a lot of working with administrators, a lot of work on my own part, because a lot of things that will come up will not be things that will affect the Student Senate as a whole, but they'll be things that we'll need to talk about. A lot of times it's not very effective to go to the Texan and scream at something that we want changed, because it just gets them that much angrier at us. I honestly do believe in going through some of the back channels, and talking to people and saying, "Hey, don't you think we could change this?" I think we can affect policy, and I think the best way is if they think that we can give some good input. I'm not sure they believe that now; I'm not sure they believe that students are a necessity to this university; I'm not sure they believe that students' opinions are anything that could give them any more input. They have an angle that is different from ours, and they think that is going to be the best one; we need to convince them otherwise.

DSG: Or at least, to listen.

KREINDLER: Yeah; at least to listen.... Right now, there aren't enough students in that policy-making circle, and there really aren't any faculty up in that circle either, although they listen to the faculty because all of them have been in academia at one time or another, for the most part, so they understand how that works.... But I don't think they understand students' feelings; they don't understand why we think we should control student fees. They see the fee as if you bought a movie ticket: you paid that money, and you have no right to say how that movie should be shown, or what movie is being shown; you pay that ticket, and you're going to see what's there. That's just a fundamental point that we do not agree on. They could avoid a lot of the adversarial role if they would just talk to us. This fee bill would have come up anyway; however, I'm sure it would have been softer in tone if last year when the Fee Committee wanted to meet with Dr. Flawn, he had said, "Sure, I'll sit down with you; let's talk about our differences." Instead, he didn't answer their correspondence, he ignored the committee, he went to the Board of Regents and changed the budget and didn't even tell the committee that he was going to do that, and when they start screaming afterwards, "Hey, look what you did to our budget!", they say that that was a mess-up, and we should have gotten the information. Oh, well, terrific! I think we could use some sort of mechanism where that will not happen.

DSG: What do you see as the outstanding threats to the continued existence of the Students' Association over the next several years? A lot of people have said that it's just a matter of time until it's abolished again, because it does not have any real power.

KREINDLER: OK; let's talk about two threats.... The greatest threat to student government is student government itself. Student government did not get abolished because the president said it was bad--I mean, the regents thought about striking the election; wiping out the minutes; that it shouldn't be abolished.... I believe we are our worst enemy; on the other hand, we are also our best friend. If we can put together a productive program, a program that shows results; if we can say to the campus, "Look what we're doing," no one's going to abolish us. You don't get rid of something that has positive benefits, and I think the Students' Association will do that.

DSG: How is student government its own worst enemy?

KREINDLER: If it does nothing--if it goes around saying "Get Out of El Salvador"; if it goes around saying "Let's divest from South Africa," and just keeps spouting off at the mouth and pushing a lot of paper; talking about student fees, more control, and hollering and not getting anything accomplished, it's not worth anything. Pushing a lot of paper, spending a lot of money, and running around in circles is getting nothing accomplished except padding some resumes and patting yourselves

on the back. If, on the other hand, it is productive, it has positive results, it gets things done--and it is proving to be a very positive force on the campus--then it can be it's own best friend.

The [second threat] is the campus.... On the campus, right now, there is a largely apathetic and anti-student government feeling. I think that was shown by the Hank vote, which brought out a lot of people supporting what basically was a joke candidate for president, and I think that really severely damaged the credibility of this organization in its few months. That is something that can be combatted by strengthening the internal workings. No one is going to be able to say that student government is bad, if it's doing good things. You can say it's bad if it's sitting there and twiddling its thumbs; but if they're creating the SURE program and they're doing a recycling drive, and they're doing a textbook exchange, and they're working on minority recruitment and involving them in the processes of this campus, and they're getting control of student fees and the administration is starting to listen to them, and saying, "Well, we've conceded this point to the students," then I honestly believe that student government is going to last. So as I said, the internal is more important, but that external constituency--convincing people that it's good, that they have something to vote for, that they shouldn't be apathetic, and that they should care--is something that we need to do. A referendum could come up tomorrow to abolish student government. There's no way to stop that.... And there's a possibility it could pass. We need to eliminate the possibility that that could pass.

DSG: So it's the internal affairs that are the key.

KREINDLER: The internal affairs are the key, but you've got to look for that external, and you've got to direct your internal workings to avoid the external threat. And that includes the administration also; they have to understand that we are here, we are a viable organization that is providing student services that they should support. They supported the creation of student government; I'm not sure why--so Peter Flawn can say, "Yes, I listen to representative students from the campus"? That may be a very good reason. On the other hand, I'd like to think--and hopefully, not naively so--that they did it because they believed that we could be a positive force on this campus, and implement policy.... We need to convince them, from the external side, that the internal workings are worth their time.

DSG: One final question: what do you want to be remembered for? What lasting mark do you want to leave as the greatest accomplishment of the Kreindler Administration?

KREINDLER: In terms of a specific project, or one deed that I can say "I did," I don't have one. But if there's anything--and my term is going to be a crucial one, because it is the first full term of student government since it returned; the foundation's been built...--that I can be remembered for, it would be establishing the credibility of this organization; making it a viable source on campus, and making it accepted by the campus. That includes things like getting to

orientation and saying to these people, "Here's student government; it's really good; there's a lot it can do." Those people who are coming in to college now, they don't give a damn about student control of student fees. I know I didn't, when I was a freshman; that wasn't something you thought about; you just wanted to look classy, and "Oh, my God, I don't have a date for Friday night." You've got to open your eyes and say, "Look, we are citizens in Austin." Paul Begala said that student government should act as the conscience of this University; I think that's one thing it should do, and that's one way of establishing the credibility of the students--question what the University is doing. But that is only one small way of creating the credibility of your organization. The greatest thing I think I can do is to make sure that that credibility is established, to insure that this organization will be a long-lasting organization, as it was in the past.

(And now the trumpets play, and the music comes in....)

## APPENDICES

- I. Presidents of the Students' Association, 1932-1983
- II. Cartoons and Clippings, 1982-1983

## PRESIDENTS OF THE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION, 1932-1983

1932-1933 Allan Shivers  
 1933-1934 Hill Hodges  
 1934-1935 John Junior Bell  
 1935-1936 J. Jenkins Garrett  
 1936-1937 Jimmie Brinkley  
 1937-1938 J.J. "Jake" Pickle  
 1938-1939 John B. Connally  
 1939-1940 Sydney C. Reagan  
 1940-1941 J. Ward Fouts  
 1941-1942 Fred Niemann  
 1942-1943 William Arthur "Bill" Barton  
 1943-1944 T. Lawrence "Larry" Jones (April '43-February '44)  
 Bill Booth (March-April '44)  
 1944-1945 Malcolm E. "Mac" Wallace (April '44-February '45)  
 Anna Buchanan (March-April '45)  
 1945-1946 Clayton E. Blakeway (April '45-March '46)  
 Richard Mollison (April '46)  
 1946-1947 James W. "Jim" Smith (April '46-January '47)  
 Howard D. McElroy (January '47-March '47)  
 Fritz Lyne (April '47)  
 1947-1948 Bradley Bourland (April '47-February '48)  
 John Fry (March '48-April '48)  
 1948-1949 Harold Barefoot Sanders  
 1949-1950 Ellis Brown  
 1950-1951 Lloyd Hand  
 1951-1952 Wales H. Madden, Jr. (April '51-December '52)  
 Wilson Foreman (January '52-April '52)  
 1952-1953 Rush Moody  
 1953-1954 Franklin Spears  
 1954-1955 Jerry Wilson  
 1955-1956 Ray Farrabee (May '55-October '55) -  
 Bob Siegal (October '55)  
 Roland Dahlin (November '55-April '56)  
 1956-1957 Lloyd Leroy Hayes  
 1957-1958 Harley Clark  
 1958-1959 William Howard Wolf  
 1959-1960 Frank Claude Cooksey  
 1960-1961 Robert Cameron Hightower (April '60-December '60)  
 Maurice S. Olian (December '60-April '61)  
 1961-1962 Maurice S. Olian  
 1962-1963 Lowell Lebermann (April '62-August '62)  
 Marion "Sandy" Sanford (September '62-April '63)  
 1963-1964 Julius Glickman  
 1964-1965 Gregory Owen Lipscomb  
 1965-1966 John Mack Orr  
 1966-1967 Clif Drummond  
 1967-1968 Lloyd Doggett  
 1968-1969 Rostam Mehraben Kavoussi

1969-1970 Joseph R. Krier  
1970-1971 Jeffery J. Jones  
1971-1972 Robert Thomas Binder  
1972-1973 Dick Benson  
1973-1974 Barnett Alexander "Sandy" Kress  
1974-1975 Frank Fleming  
1975-1976 Carol Ann Crabtree  
1976-1977 James B. "Jay" Adkins, Jr.  
1977-1978 Judy Spalding  
1982-1983 Paul Edward Begala (November '82-March '83)  
1983-1984 Mitchell Reed "Mitch" Kreindler



Fr '82 • THE DAILY TEXAN

# STUDENT GOVERNMENT?

ON THE BALLOT TODAY YOU WILL BE ASKED WHETHER YOU WANT STUDENT GOVERNMENT, BUT NOT WHETHER YOU CARE. SINCE ONLY ABOUT 10% OF YOU WILL VOTE ...  
 I WAS WONDERING  
 WHAT THE OTHER 90% OF YOU THOUGHT.  
 SO JUST CLIP OUT THE ENCLOSED COUPON  
 AND MAIL IT TO ME:

MICHAEL FRY  
 OF THE DAILY TEXAN  
 DRAWER D UNIVERSITY STA.  
 AUSTIN, TX 78712

3-10-82



EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT NOT TO GIVE A DAMN BY CHECKING ONE OR MORE:

- ☐ I couldn't care less
- ☐ I could care less, but then I'd be dead
- ☐ The leaders of Group Effort and Associated Students should have a mud wrestling match with the winner receiving a lifetime subscription to "The Senior Cabinet Minutes."

Cartoon by Daily Texan artist Michael Fry on day of the spring 1982 student government referendum. (March 10)

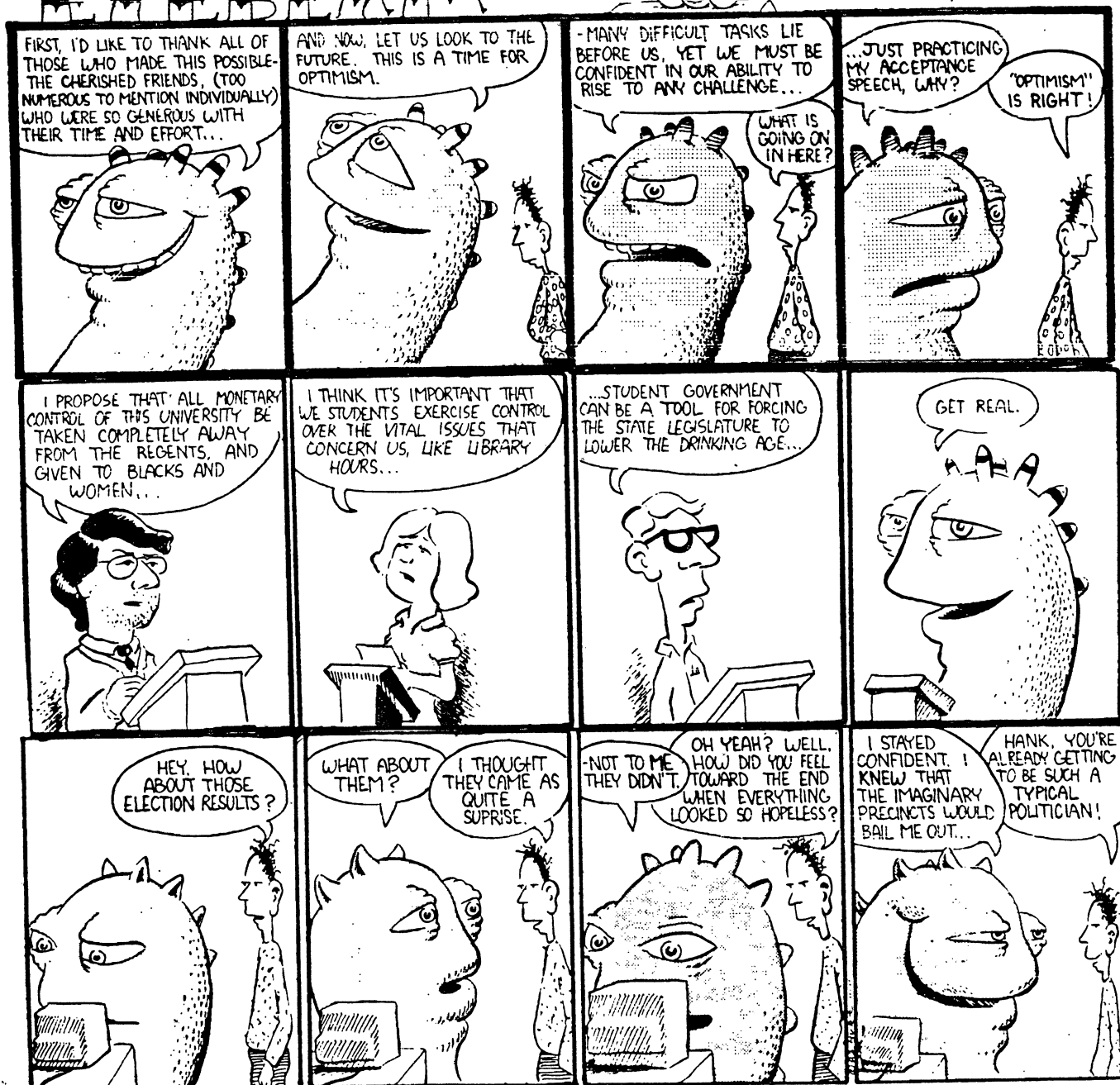


Hank the Hallucination's candidacy for student body president

Top to bottom: October 19, 20, 22, 1983

# MEMEBEAM

by Sam Hurt



Hank's campaign and victory

Top to bottom: November 4, 9, and 11, 1983

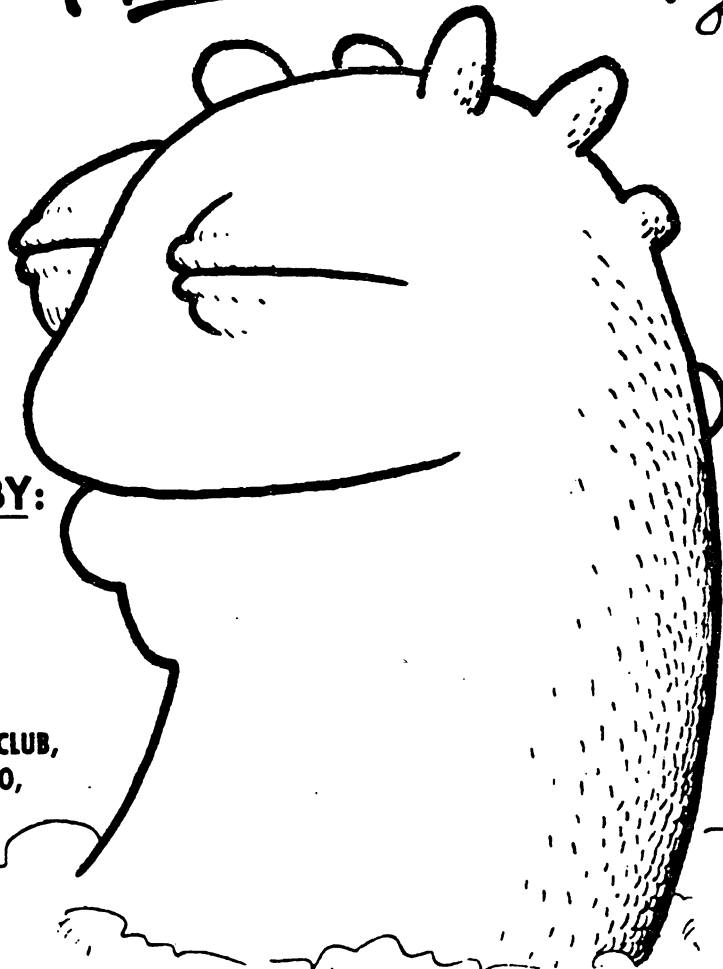
**VOTE YOUR MIND**  
**1)WRITE IN: HANK**  
**2)VOTE FOR THE REFERENDUM**  
*The Candidate of Your Dreams*

*I AM YOUR DREAM*

*"...it's a  
free concert!"*

**ENDORSED BY:**

THE UT SHUTTLE  
BUS DRIVERS,  
AMY THE WONDERDOG,  
HARVEY THE RABBIT,  
THE KAMAKAZI LAW  
STUDENTS ASSOC.,  
THE EASTWOODS PARK CLUB,  
SALIVA & SLOTH, BONZO,  
ET., THE GUACAMOLE  
QUEEN, STUD MUFFINS  
ET AL.



JOIN HANK AT  
SCHOLZ'S  
FOR A VICTORY PARTY  
7:00 → ?

**IF YOU  
DON'T  
WALK  
SOMEONE  
HOME TONIGHT,  
A STRANGER  
MIGHT.**

*Be a volunteer for S.U.R.E. For more  
information call 471-3166 or come by  
Texas Union room 4.310. **BE SURE.***



**STUDENTS  
UNITED FOR  
RAPE  
ELIMINATION**

**SOMEONE  
YOU KNOW  
IS AFRAID OF  
GETTING  
RAPED  
TONIGHT.  
BE SURE THEY  
DON'T.**

*Be a volunteer for S.U.R.E. For more  
information call 471-3166 or come by  
Texas Union room 4.310. **BE SURE.***

**BE SURE.**



**STUDENTS  
UNITED FOR  
RAPE  
ELIMINATION**

**IF YOUR  
BEST FRIEND  
WAS RAPED  
LAST NIGHT,  
WOULD YOU WANT  
TO WALK ALONE  
TONIGHT?**

*Be escorted by two  
uniformed S.U.R.E.  
volunteers carrying  
flashlights and ID.  
cards.*

**BE S.U.R.E.  
471-WALK**

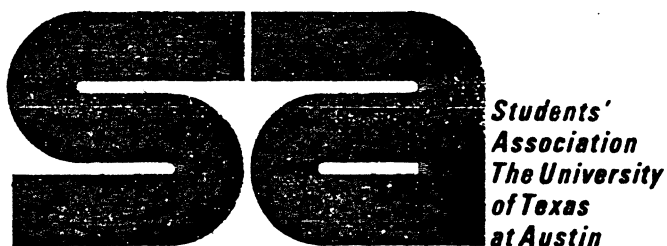


**STUDENTS  
UNITED FOR  
RAPE  
ELIMINATION**

S.U.R.E. advertisements from  
The Daily Texan, spring 1983

●	1. REGISTER VOTERS
	2. PUBLICIZE STUDENT ISSUES
	3. ANSWER STUDENT QUESTIONS
	4. PUBLISH HOUSING GUIDE
	5. RAISE FUNDS FOR ACTIVITIES
●	6. LOBBY STATE LEGISLATURE
	7. ACCOUNT FOR STUDENT SERVICE FEES
	8. ESTABLISH A WALKING ESCORT SERVICE
	9. DO TEACHER EVALUATIONS
●	10. ORGANIZE CHILD CARE CENTER

**So what are you doing today?**



Students' Association advertisement in The Daily Texan,  
Campus Election Day, March 1, 1983

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ADDENDUM AND ERRATA

THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE AT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN,  
1932-1933 TO 1982-1983

by

David Scott Goldstein

p. 38: Contrary to the Students' Association records, President Benedict was not the first head of the University to die while in office. In fact, there had been two others: Leslie Waggener (president ad interim 1895-1896) and William Lambdin Prather (president 1899-1905).

p. 177: Although the proposal was made by Fleming that the student representation on the University Council be increased to nine, it was apparently never approved by the Council, as six students serve on it today.

ADDITIONS TO BIBLIOGRAPHY

Berry, Margaret C. Student Life and Customs, 1883-1933. at the University of Texas. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1975.

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The University of Texas System Board of Regents. Rules and Regulations, 1982. (Part I, Chapter 6, Section 5-- "Participation in Student Government"--recognizes and provides for the existence of students' associations at the component institutions, and defines the student governments' powers and roles in relation to the Board and the campus administrations.)